DECEMBER, 1960

TWO SHILLINGS

# BALLET TODAY

ANTONIO IN JUGANDO AL TORO

# Ballet TODAY

A MONTHLY REVIEW DEVOTED TO DANCE

ESTABLISHED 1946


THE MAGAZINE WITH THE WIDEST NEWS AND PHOTO COVERAGE OF BALLET THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Ninette de Valois featured in our *Choreographers of Today* series.


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**OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON 12th JANUARY, 1961.**

# Editor's Log

Nadia Nerina and Nikolai Fadeyechev acknowledging the applause of the spectators after their performance of *Swan Lake* in Moscow.

THE Royal Ballet will commence their season at Covent Garden on the 14th December with Margot Fonteyn flying over from Los Angeles to dance in the title role of *Cinderella* on opening night. Nadia Nerina and Svetlana Beriosova will also interrupt the North American tour to star in the same ballet during this season and Lynn Seymour will be making her debut in the title role. Once again the Ugly Sisters will be played by women, Rosemary Lindsay, as before, the first sister, and a newcomer to the role of the second sister, Meriel Evans, who returns as guest artist for these performances. Donald Britton plays the Jester.

Nadia Nerina has had such a spectacular triumph in Russia where she gave two performances of *Swan Lake* at the Bolshoi and two of *Giselle* at the Kirov in Leningrad that she has been invited to return to Russia early in 1961.

It is the Kirov Ballet Company (formerly the Imperial Ballet of the Maryinsky) that is to be presented by the Royal Opera House in conjunction with Victor Hochhauser in a season at Covent Garden next June.

Nerina will be seen in *Swan Lake* at Covent Garden during the season. Lynn Seymour will also appear in this ballet. Cranko's *Sweeney Todd* will curdle our blood on triple bill evenings.

Doreen Wells will dance Swanilda in *Coppelia*, her first leading classical role at Covent Garden. Elizabeth Anderton will also appear in this role.

Kenneth MacMillan's new work, *The Invitation*, premièred in Oxford on the 10th November, will be seen for the first time at the Garden on the 30th December, starring Anne Heaton, Lynn Seymour, Desmond Doyle and Christopher Gable. Decor is by Nicholas Georgiadis, with music by Matyas Seiber, the last score he completed before his tragic death in a car accident in September.

Doreen Wells who is to dance her first leading classical role at Covent Garden during this season Photo: by Bill Farley.

Another opportunity to see Fonteyn dance during the month will be at the Gala Performance on Thursday, December 8th, at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. As reported in our last issue, there will also be an all-star cast including Maria and Marjorie Tallchief, George Skibine, Vladimir Skouratoff, Erik Bruhn, Markova, John Gilpin, and Lucette Aldous. Fonteyn will not after all be dancing *Apparitions* as was first thought. *The Firebird* pas de deux, partnered by Michael Somes, has been substituted.

Other changes are as follows:—Belinda Wright will not be dancing with John Gilpin, who is now expected to do a solo. Vyroubova and Prokovsky will do the pas de deux which Londoners saw in the French film *Le Spectre de la Danse* at the recent season of ballet films at the National Film Theatre.

And for full measure the Ballet de Rio de Janeiro will present *Zuimalaati*, a fifteen-minute voodoo ballet by their Company of thirty-four dancers.

The Gala matinée, as in previous years, is in aid of the Royal Academy of Dancing and is to be graced by the presence of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and H.R.H. The Princess Margaret.

You must hurry if you are to stand a chance of getting tickets for this show, and be prepared to turn out your pockets, for all the cheaper seats had already been sold at the beginning of November.

Two of this season's Cinderellas. Margot Fonteyn and Svetlana Beriosova.

# editor's log *CONTINUED*

FESTIVAL Ballet will again present *Nutcracker* for their Christmas season at the Royal Festival Hall which commences on the 26th December.

Five ballerinas will dance the Sugar Plum Fairy, Belinda Wright, Marilyn Burr, Olga Ferri, Jeanette Minty and Dianne Richards. Amongst the Princes will be Oleg Briansky, Vladimir Skouratoff, Louis Godfrey and Jelko Yuresha.

Two very important items of news emerged during the month. Leon Woizikowski has been appointed Regisseur Generale to the Company and will accompany them on their long European tour next year. This commences on the 25th February in Venice, and some of the countries to be visited will be Sicily, Italy and the South of France. The other is that the famous Russian choreographer Vladimir Bourmeister will produce a full length ballet for the Company next year. The ballet will be *The Snow Maiden*, never before seen in this country, with music by Tchaikovsky. This will be premièred in Florence in the spring during the Company's European tour, and Londoners will see it at the opening of the summer season at the Royal Festival Hall.

Other Company news is that Deirdre O'Conaire is now a principal soloist, and promotion to the rank of ballerina is imminent. Ten new girls and six boys have been taken on.

Deirdre O'Conaire with Jean Pierre-Alban in *Concerti*. Photo: Jas. D. O'Callaghan

### De Cuevas lays the dust

The illness of the Marquis de Cuevas has led to rumours that his latest ballet *La Belle au Bois Dormant* presented at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées in November would be his last, and that after this the Company would be dissolved. Now once again this extraordinary man has startled Paris by appearing at the première of the ballet on 3rd November. Dressed in a long black cloak lined with red and green velvet he made a speech from his wheelchair which was drawn on to the stage. After having expressed his gratitude to his collaborators he declared that he was the sole director of the Company, that he would not retire, and added "if I must die then I die in the wings".

Liane Daydé and Serge Golovine danced the principal roles at the première. Nina Vyroubova, who was unable to dance owing to an attack of nervous depression, is expected to take the role of Princess Aurora in the near future.

*The Marquis de Cuevas*

### Series of talks

Dennis Gray Stoll, composer and former conductor of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, will give an illustrated talk on *Music and Ballet in Eastern Europe* at Robert Crosbie House, 62, Queen's Gardens, London, W.2, at 8.30 p.m. on Friday, January 6th. It is the first of the New Year series of Friday talks arranged by the Indian Institute of World Culture, and all meetings are open and free. Mr. Stoll has travelled widely, visiting the Soviet Union twice. He contributed an article on the Hungarian dancers, Gabriella Lakatos and Ferenc Havas, in our November issue.

### America

The Jose Limon Dance Company filmed four of its ballets at the Connecticut College School of Dance in New London during its past summer season. The works filmed were *Night Spell* by Doris Humphrey; Ruth Currier's *Toccata*, *The Apostaté* by Jose Limon; and Pauline Koner's *Barren Sceptre*. A copy will be placed in the Dance Collection of the New York City Public Library.

### A plea for the "Specialist"

THE surprise with which the public received the news that three major newspapers were to close down proved one thing at least—few people realise the difficulties under which all printed publications are struggling today. If, as you have now heard, newspapers counting their readers in millions cannot make a profit without extensive advertising, then you can imagine the tremendous odds under which a specialist magazine labours, where both advertising and circulation is always bound to be limited. There may be some making a profit, but in the arts in particular no one does, and if it were not for the unpaid work of the dedicated few then these publications would go out of existence. Costs have risen to such an extent that you simply cannot make a profit on a small circulation, in fact you are lucky if you do not make a loss on each copy sold through the trade after you have given discount. There is a limit to the price you can ask the public, you cannot cut down in other directions because practically everyone works for nothing, or next to nothing.

There is a big to-do every time a national newspaper or large magazine meets its end but the little publications die in alarming numbers each year. They slip quietly away, with no post-mortem but to everyone concerned in their particular subject, whether professionally or as a hobby each one is a very real personal and irremediable loss. More often than not apathy is the executioner. Assistants tell you the magazine is "sold out" or "isn't in" (at various times I have been told that *Ballet Today* was "out of print," "discontinued" or "they were unable to obtain it". At the risk of appearing ungrateful to those in the trade who do understand and sympathise with the problems of the small publication, the money going into the till determines the show it gets, and many specialist magazines are relegated to under the counter once delivered. We don't expect the best place, but we cannot hope to increase our sales if we never see the light of day.

Well other people's troubles are always a bore, and it has never been the policy of this magazine to reprove, admonish or try to persuade the public that supporting this or that is their "duty", but as it is Christmas time and a season when new resolutions are made I make a plea, not only for our own magazine but to readers everywhere, no matter what your hobby or interest—whether you be a balletomane, cricket fan, or pigeon-fancier—if you think your magazine on your chosen subject is worthwhile then support it by taking out a subscription, placing a regular order or if you have already done this go one step further and try to interest your friends in the publication, and above all do it now so that 1961 is not another black year for the specialist press.

### Greetings

To dancers, their audiences and those who by force of circumstance can only read about the world of dance, I send my Christmas and New Year greetings. I truly believe that in the pursuit and preservation of beauty there lies hope for the peace and brotherhood of all men. Dancers throughout the world meet and through the medium of their art exchange a common language. May we lesser mortals do likewise in 1961.

**ESTELLE HERF**

# LONDON REVIEWS

by FERNAU HALL

## AN EVENING WITH ZIZI JEANMAIRE

ZIZI Jeanmaire is one of the great ballerinas of our time. No one who saw her interpretation of the role of Carmen is ever likely to forget it: though Petit's treatment of the Carmen story had a number of weaknesses, Jeanmaire created the title role in Petit's ballet with such dramatic intensity that one could forget the defects while she was on the stage.

Since then Roland Petit has choreographed some other interesting ballets—above all *Le Loup*—but for some reason he has created no other major role for his wife Jeanmaire. This made one look forward with special interest to the ballet which he created for her London season, which opened at the Royalty Theatre on 2nd November; *Rain*, with story taken from the book by Somerset Maugham, seemed to offer real opportunities both to Petit and to Jeanmaire.

It was unfortunately obvious from the rise of the curtain that Petit had made no effort whatever to come to grips with the theme or make any real use of Jeanmaire's marvellous talents. The steps and gestures of seduction which he gave to her (as Sadie) were so completely banal and feeble that for a time I thought he was attempting an odd satire on previous work done by himself and other choreographers in this genre. But after a time it became clear that there was no comic intention: Petit had just made no attempt whatever to use his imagination, and strung together in any old order whatever clichés sprang most easily to his mind. It was really embarrassing to see such a fine artist as Jeanmaire struggling gamely with such appalling dull and meaningless material. As for Buzz Miller, he had even less opportunity in the role of the Minister; and the ballet choreographed by him (*Variation sur un Pas*) was a very dreary little number in the American jazz style. The first half also included some desperately awkward attempts at American jazz by a French band, and a rather ordinary music-hall act (who did however perform one good number—a parody of table-tennis). In the second half of the programme we saw Jeanmaire in a series of cabaret songs, which she performed very well. But the whole programme was ill-assorted, and was crippled by the feeble quality of its ballets. *Ah, Zizi, qu'alliez-vous faire dans cette galère?*

## INDRANI

EXPECTATIONS of Indrani and her company were whetted by reports of her great impact in Paris and in America (where her success was such that she was brought back to the Barbizon Plaza Theatre in New York for a return season, and the American State Department made arrangements to sponsor a tour next year—an unparalleled honour for a foreign artist).

The show which Indrani and her artists gave at St. Pancras Town Hall on 1st November more than lived up to expectations. It was unique in two ways: it presented her for the first time at the head of a company, and it gave the West its first sight of a wonderful ancient classical style of dance-drama which has remained only a legend up to now. As a result we saw a show containing the most fascinating variety of styles, with every item reaching a high standard and taking extra resonance from its contrast with other items.

Inevitably the most exciting new items were the four ballets (or dance-dramas) in the Kuchipudi style, which was previously unknown except in its home in Andhra State in South India. Scholars have traced back the origins of this style to a very early date, and in fact it includes certain elements (such as speech by the actor-dancers) which take us back to the golden age of Indian classical dancing, in the early centuries of the Christian era. But a style can be very old without necessarily being beautiful or expressive: in fact Kuchipudi is both, to a very high degree.

The ballets presented by Indrani represented condensations by her and her Kuchipudi guru Narasimha Rao of long traditional Kuchipudi dance-dramas: as with Kathakali, a good deal of compression is needed to adapt the leisurely Indian original to the laws of the Western theatre. But this compression was done with taste and intelligence, preserving the original balance of dramatic dance and pure dance in the original. In its dance-technique the style showed itself as very close to the Bharata Natyam of the adjoining state of Madras: in fact experts in Kuchipudi state that the world-famous Bharatâ Natyam is a development out of Kuchipudi. In its dramatic structure Kuchipudi proved to have much in common with Kathakali; unlike the Kathakali actor-dancers, the Kuchipudi artists (who traditionally are all men, and all Brahmins) do not swathe their bodies in huge costumes, nor use mask-like make-up, and so it is possible to take in the dance-technique more easily than with Kathakali.

Narasimha Rao was outstanding in violent, overbearing roles in the four dance-dramas. He is an artist of great power, who seems to grow several feet in stature as soon as he steps on the stage: his eyes flash with terrifying intensity as he lashes himself into a fury—as a demon, as an evil king, or as Virabhadra, the god Shiva in his most terrifying aspect. Narasimha Rao has in fact the capacity (as do only a few very great Indian artists) of making every gesture and facial expression "speak" most vividly and carry to the farthest part of the theatre without attenuation.

Baliram proved to be an artist of the opposite type: noble, dignified, serene, marvellously beautiful as only an Indian man can be—the perfect exponent of the god Shiva, and no less well suited to pure dances in Bharata Natyam style. His line was admirable, both in pure dances and in dramatic dances—such as when he took the splendid role of the man-lion Narsimha in the dance drama *Prahalada Charitam*, reminding one of the equally splendid lions in Kabuki.

Indrani herself, who impressed us last year by the versatility she showed in mastering the previously unknown classical style of Orissi, showed no less impressive a mastery of Kuchipudi. She was at her very best in a magical solo, *Manduka Shabdam*, in which she took the part of a frog who is transformed into a lovely girl. As she pouted her lips and coyly blinked her eyes, she was so voluptuous and entrancing it was easy to understand why the demon-king Ravana should be smitten with desire for her and carry her off. This solo represented a new peak of stylish and powerful dramatic expression in Indrani's career as an artist.

The contrast between this warm seductiveness and the cool, mysterious beauty of the Orissi style which she showed in *Orissi Suite* was most engaging. It was a delight to encounter this style once again, with its many unique features such as the thrice-bent position of the body (as in ancient statues), the pirouettes on the heel and the sideways swaying of the hips.

It is most unusual for gurus to learn styles other than their own; but Deva Prasad Das, Indrani's Orissi guru, showed fine adaptability by dancing in Kuchipudi style in the Kuchipudi dance-dramas, and demonstrated both eloquence of movement and a keen sense of humour in the Chau dance *Shikari* (in which he mimed a hunter in the forest). This simple dramatic dance, lacking the sophistication of classical dacnes, had its own feckless and engaging charm.

The second programme (7th and 9th November) began with Indrani looking supremely confident in a Bharata Natyan item which suits her very well—*Tillana*: here we saw intriguing *adavus* (standard enchainements) introducing gently curved arm movements of a type previously unknown in the West. She was also very impressive in another Bharata Natyam item, a song-dance which she staged as a pas de deux with Baliram: it was fascinating to see the two dancers side by side, translating the words of the song into gestures which at times were in unison and at other times diverged from each other—Baliram suggesting the heroism of the mighty Rama and Indrani providing a more feminine gloss on the words.

In addition to two Kuchipudi ballets repeated from the first programme, the second programme included two further Kuchipudi ballets. One showed an episode from the Indian epic Mahabharata, in which the god Shiva tests the valour of the hero Arjuna by shooting a boar at the same time as Arjuna, and contesting with him about who was entitled to claim the boar: in fact the noble, powerful Kuchipudi style showed itself well suited to establish the right atmosphere for this epic scene. In another ballet, *Singhi, Singhadu and Konangi* we saw a totally different (and admirably contrasted) aspect of Kuchipudi.

(*continued at foot of page 6*)

## SEASON OF BALLET FILMS AT THE NATIONAL FILM THEATRE *(continued)*

The third programme contained two novelties—*Capriccio 59*, showing dancers of the Hamburg Opera, and *Two Chinese Dances*, performed by Tai Ai-Lien. The first of these had the unintended merit of showing just how appalling can be the ballet in German opera houses. These theatres often have permanent ballet companies but have no permanent repertoires and tend to lack any real contact with ballet traditions; moreover, their "ballet evenings" usually represent a very minor part of the year's work. On the other hand they do offer scope to choreographers—for the ballet company benefits from the subsidy given to the opera house—and the possibility exists for good work to be done when a choreographer of talent is employed. Such was certainly not the case when the film *Capriccio 59* was made in Hamburg: we see a hodge-podge of quite unrelated and dreary scenes—clumsy classroom enchaînements, waltz-steps with unpointed feet in the most Kitsch German manner, solemn and meaningless modern-dance movements in the Wigman style which was dated thirty years ago, and so on. Significantly, the film gives no credit to any choreographer.

*Two Chinese Dances* is very interesting as showing the work Tai Ai-Lien was doing in China some fifteen years ago, soon after her arrival in China. I remember her as a modern dancer in London, before the war, performing her own idea of Chinese dances (together with a beautiful "Chinese" dance arranged for her by Ernest Berk, *Yang Kwei Fei*). Though her forebears were Chinese she had been born in the West Indies and had had no direct contact with China. Realising that she could not go on indefinitely creating her own brand of Chinese dances, she very sensibly went to China and (with Government support) immersed herself in the study of Chinese folk-dances. In the film she shows first a ceremonial drum dance of the Yao people of South-West China: as she circles the big drum she beats out simple rhythms on it. (Drum dances of this kind take us back to the origins of the Chinese and Japanese cultures.) The other dance, *The Mute and the Cripple*, is also credited to South-West China, but clearly contains a large element of choreography by Tai Ai-Lien. With the head and shoulders of an old deaf mute strapped to the front of her waist Tai Ai-Lien suggests that she is a cripple riding on the back of the old man most convincingly. Some of the dance is charming—notably the movements by which the old man shifts the girl further up on to "his" shoulders; its chief fault is that it goes on too long, in view of its extreme choreographic simplicity.

The main item in the third programme was the marvellous Martha Graham film *A Dancer's World*. This is so closely packed that it bears seeing over and over again, with or without an interval between viewings: all our choreographers can learn a great deal from it, and dancers too can profit from a study of the intense and dedicated concentration of the artists taking part. Once one gets used to the portentousness of Martha Graham's commentary one can see that she talks a great deal of good sense. Perhaps her most important theme is the importance of the development of artistic maturity in the dancer: technique is perfected in ten years of training, and then the dancer is ready to "dance the deep matters of the heart." This aspect of dancing is superbly illustrated by Yuriko: to piano music with a strong suggestion of the gamelan she performs smooth curving movements with a strong Eastern flavour which show the commanding and expressive clarity of a great and mature artist.

The most important novelty in the programme given in the fourth and last week consisted of some sequences from *Ballerina*. This film—with very little dialogue and commentary—was made in Paris in 1950 by Ludwig Berger, a German director belonging to the golden age of the German film that preceded the Nazi era. There was a great deal of dream-like fantasy in the film, and Berger and his choreographer Yvonne Georgi assembled a fine company of dancers to perform the various sequences; the leading male role was taken by Nicolas Orloff (then dancing very well) and the fifteen-year-old Violette Verdy, discovered by Berger in the studio of the teacher Madame Rossane, danced the title role.

It was natural enough for Berger to make use of a choreographer with a background in Germany comparable to his own. In fact Yvonne Georgi (half German, half North African) was trained in modern dance in Germany, and was for a time the partner of the famous German modern dancer Harald Kreutzberg. She worked for some years in the Netherlands, before and during the War, being the choreographer of the only Dutch ballet company. Her choreography for the film is not very imaginative, but—as is often true of the work of choreographers with her background—it is intelligent and highly professional. In fact it is seen at its best in a sequence in a Haute Couture establishment in which there is hardly any choreography in the ordinary sense of the word: just a series of simple movements (such as people running) worked out to suit the camera, and combined together in a series of very short shots to give a feeling of speed and excitement. This is real film ballet—something one very rarely sees—and completely successful. It now remains for some intelligent cinema proprietor to show us the whole film; for that matter, the British Film Institute would have been well advised to show us more of this intriguing film and cut out entirely *Steps of the Ballet*, which has been shown all to too often in this country—and is in any case a bad film, giving a desperately sentimental and trivial idea of the art of ballet.

Violette Verdy is not called on for any difficult acting or dancing in the sequence of *Ballerina* shown in London, but did what she has to do surpassingly well: in 1950 she was a "baby ballerina" in the great Parisian tradition. After the programme I walked across Waterloo Bridge to have another look at the Violette Verdy of today—dancing the lead in *The Princess*. She is of course much more mature artistically than she was ten years ago, and has profited enormously from her work with choreographers such as Petit and Balanchine. When she told me how much she enjoyed working with Balanchine, I was reminded of the fact that we have not seen the New York City Ballet here for seven years—and have little idea how Balanchine has been tackling modern music. Ideally, one would like to see a combined visit by his company and the Martha Graham company: financially this would be difficult, but an American sponsor might be found.

The other important novelty in this particular week of films in London was *Indonesia Dances*, a film made in 1959 in Indonesia and directed by Kotot Sukardi. This shows three Indonesian dances, presented simply and tastefully against a black background that shows up the line of the dancers' bodies and limbs perfectly. In the first dance we see a very fine classical Javanese dancer Hasanuddin in a Javanese court dance showing a prince preparing for battle, with all the splendid head movements, foot movements and symbolic gestures characteristic of this style: he shows just the right combination of grace and elegant pride (and his dance is admirably cut to a length suited to a film of this nature). Then comes a rather inferior pas de quatre—an adaptation of a Serimpi dance, performed in an amateurish way by University students, and quite ruined artistically by the mounting of large wings on the girls' shoulders to make them look like butterflies. (Much of the time they pull on wires to make their wings flap!) Fortunately the film ends with a delightful miniature Balinese dance-drama, with a romantic theme rather like that of *La Sylphide:* a king falls in love with a goddess, and prevents her from flying back to heaven by seizing her scarf; then they dance together, and all ends happily. The part of the King is danced by a man looking astonishingly like the great Balinese dancer and dance-composer Mario, though he is much too young to be Mario himself; he uses the apparently miraculous technique of moving about with knees tucked under the body, almost sitting on the ground, which Mario invented for the dance *Kebyar*. The chief demi-goddess and the four lesser demi-goddesses dance in Legong style, and these roles are interpreted by girls of staggering beauty: did the director perhaps select the most beautiful of all the ex-Legongs in Bali? (Traditionally, a girl cannot remain a Legong after she reaches the age of puberty: these great classical dancers are the original "baby ballerinas".)

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**INDRANI** *(continued from page 5)*

The great dance-dramas are long and complex, being intended for relatively sophisticated audiences viewing them in temples, palaces or theatres. But there are other genres of Kuchipudi, and one of them, *Yenkey Natyam*, is intended for the entertainment of unsophisticated villagers. In *Singhi, Singhadu and Konangi* we saw three people wandering through the country—a soothsayer, her consort and a jester: there was some dramatic action (with the soothsayer prophesying the future) but this was kept very simple, and there was a good deal of vigorous rhythmic dancing by all three moving together.

The programme ended as before with a magnificent battle between the demon Mahish (Narasinha Rao) and the goddess Durga (Indrani): as in Kathakali battles, the two figures gave a strong suggestion of cosmic forces as they circled each other and mimed their blows in graceful but powerful gestures.

In both programmes the dancing owed a good deal of its impact to the musical accompaniment, provided by three outstanding South Indian musicians—Lokia (singer), Srinavas Murthy (flute) and Krishna Pillai (drum). The singing composed by Lokia for the Kuchipudi items was of particular interest, for this is not completely standardised as is the music for Bharata Natyam.

FERNAU HALL

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**from NEW SOUTH WALES**

Dear Madam,

May I congratulate you upon the attractive lay-out and commendable lack of 'gush' in your paper and express my particular appreciation of its wide coverage, and the reviews of Fernau Hall, who never forgets that ballet is a synthesis, and is equipped to cope with its various aspects.

Yours faithfully,

**BARBARA COOK**

*(more letters to the editor on page 9)*

# SUNDAY BALLET CLUB

ON Sunday, 13th November, at the Lyric Theatre (Shaftesbury Avenue) the Sunday Ballet Club presented a programme which differed in one important way from all previous SBC programmes: no less than three of the four ballets were by experienced professional choreographers. This gives a fair idea of the state of the present-day "market demand" for choreography: the fact is that experienced choreographers seem to find as much a need for a platform as tyros. I welcome this new development, for it puts both the pros and the tyros on their mettle; it would be a bad thing if this new development should mean any serious reduction in the opportunities made available to promising young choreographers without professional experience, but the whole record of the SBC encourages one to think that this will not be allowed to happen.

No doubt because the choreographers were so experienced, the whole programme maintained a very high level of expertise in its staging; costumes were well made and effective, the lighting plots all went smoothly and well, and the music maintained a far higher standard of originality, interest and suitability than that of any previous SBC programme.

## THE WHITE BIRD

This work was of interest in being the first ballet to be staged in England by Irish-born Denis Carey, a ballet master of a type which was common in previous centuries and is becoming fairly common in this: he moves from country to country, teaching and staging ballets with the ballet companies of the opera houses and adapting himself to the special conditions and cultural background of each new environment. He has in fact produced no less than ten ballets in countries as diverse as Mexico, Guatemala and Holland.

What stood out most strongly in *The White Bird* was the quality of the music, by the Guatemalan composer Jorge Sarmientos. This music—well reproduced from a tape made in Guatemala—was worthy and honest, showing a real feeling for the dramatic requirements of the action and the physical needs of dancers. What is more, it gave a real suggestion of ancient folk-dances, with the right sort of barbaric roughness in the harmony and instrumentation and strong rhythms that called the dancers into movement. I think Denis Carey was unwise in not surrendering himself more boldly to the rhythmic and melodic shape of the music; for in a ballet based on folk-legends a certain rough simplicity of pattern is essential. This dichotomy between the style of the music and the theme on the one hand, and the choreography on the other, was particularly evident in the finale, which did not build up visually, though both the music and the story demanded this.

The best thing in the ballet was a short solo danced in the middle of the ballet by the heroine (a young mother) at a time when, after the death of her child, she is tormented by evil spirits. This was very well danced by Gianné Calliope, a Nesta Brooking pupil making her first appearance in the big world of London ballet and (as we have come to expect from Brooking pupils) taking full advantage of each opportunity with great assurance. One might almost say that Gianné Calliope showed too much assurance: she is a dramatic dancer (of somewhat the same type as Anne Heaton), with a strong personality and extreme precision of line and rhythm, and she put into her projection of the role a sophisticated intelligence which made her seem slightly miscast in the role of a superstitious village mother. On the other hand her performance was so striking that I look forward to seeing her in a variety of other parts.

The decor, by Juanita Waterson, was simple and effective in design and well executed, establishing without fuss the right atmosphere for the changing aspects of a Guatemalan village. The men looked right in knee-breeches, but these did not marry very well with the short skirts of the women.

## SOUND BARRIER

In view of the fact that Peter Darrell became principal choreographer of the Western Theatre Ballet from its formation in 1957, it was rather surprising to find him arranging this jazz ballet for the SBC: one would have thought that if he chose to use the SBC as a platform, he would produce something "far out", not fully suited to the repertoire of a company touring small towns.

In contrast to Norman Dixon (who created in *Violent Rhythm* a ballet with a story-line similar to that of *West Side Story* without being overwhelmed by Robbins's wonderful dance-musical), Peter Darrell dreamed up a story which was worked out so clumsily as to be quite unconvincing, and his use of the jazz idiom was depressingly uninventive. We saw two Orientals trying in vain to become accepted in a Western adolescent jazz world; the Oriental boy has a fight with one of the whites, and then (for some reason) is accepted, while his girl-friend is left grieving in her isolation. This action took place in some mystifyingly vague environment—where on earth do adolescents reject Orientals?—and the occasional passages of mime had the clumsiness made familiar by earlier dramatic ballets by this choreographer.

The best things about the ballet were the score—a fine, very dramatic work in an orchestral jazz idiom by Pete Rugulo—and the dancing of the two Orientals, George Minami Jr. and Chesterina Sim Zecha. The latter was clearly taking her first important solo part, showing as she did a rather touching shyness; but this shyness went perfectly with the role, and she established a fragile but attractive personality. George Minami was equally well cast in the role of the boy, seeking desperately to establish himself in a hostile world.

The decor (by Barry Kay) could hardly have been simpler—black drapes set at various angles across the stage, with a plain door and a red ceiling—but it served admirably to evoke the vague jazz world intended by the choreographer.

## HENCE IN SOLITUDE

Michael Charnley, with his record of three ballets for the Festival Ballet, the direction of three West-End revues, choreography in a musical, and work in operetta and film in Germany, was easily the most experienced and well-established of the choreographers represented in the programme.

It was hard to understand Michael Charnley's theme, which had little to do with the quotation from Shelley printed in the programme (which referred to communion with nature). In fact we saw four girls in turn performing solos which suggested different attitudes to a lover: the latter was presumably imaginary, for the man who stood in as the lover-image did not dance with any of the girls, and in fact merely walked across the stage at one point. In its general structure the ballet showed a certain influence from *Dark Elegies* (probably the most seminal of all modern ballets) but there was nothing of the forceful emotional expression of Tudor's masterpiece. Another unsatisfactory aspect of the ballet was the lack of harmony between the music and the choreographic idiom: the former was by Chopin, whereas the latter was in a Jooss-influenced style (bringing together ballet and modern dance) rather close to that of Charnley's *Symphony for Fun*.

Nevertheless two of the solos made a real impact, partly no doubt because they were very well danced. Margaret Kovac—dark and fiery—gave to her movements a fine, crisp intensity, while Sheila O'Neil did her best to build up a convincing emotional atmosphere in a long dramatic solo in which she seemed to be appealing to her lover for understanding.

It was hard to understand why the designer (Michael Baldwin) set the back of the stage with a tall cage made of rough pieces of wood. No doubt he was anxious to give some visual expression to the fact that the characters were imprisoned within their feelings and fantasies; but the style he chose was quite wrong for the romantic theme, and even clashed with his frilly costumes (which suggested, in a way rather confusing to the spectator, no less than four Streetcar-Named-Desire Blanches).

## FIGURES

This ballet by Leo Kharibian (of *West Side Story*) followed lines very similar to those of *Variations: Jazz*, which he staged for the Oxford University Ballet Club last May, and was even more successful: it was in fact the triumph of the evening. Here was the real thing in jazz dancing, with all the loose-limbed dynamism and sudden unexpected flashes of violence to which Jerome Robbins and other American choreographers have accustomed us. And Joan Deeks was even more overwhelming as a show-stopper in the principal female role: this nineteen-year-old English girl can now challenge comparison in this style even with such a remarkable artist as Chita Rivera. She showed the same marvellous rhythmic precision and vitality as before, and the same cheeky, exuberant personality: what was new was the humour. Every now and again she caught us off-balance with some fantastic and unexpected twist she gave to the movements: her timing was delectably witty, and her facial expressions a constant joy. In view of the fact that she has been trained in modern-dance by Leo Kharibian, her dancing does as much credit to him as his ballet.

All the other dancers in the ballet danced well, keeping together in a disciplined way and never losing their cool spontaneity. And they were admirably supported by the music, written for a small jazz group by Ron Grainger and very well played by jazz musicians who included a virtuoso on percussion. One might have expected that this very noisy "hot" jazz would have seemed out of key with the "cool" choreography: in fact, however, the combination of cool and hot worked surprisingly well, like sweet and sour in a Chinese dish.

(LONDON REVIEWS *continued at foot of page 9*)

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# PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

## — LONDON —

**FESTIVAL BALLET AT THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL**

December 26th to January 14th—*The Nutcracker*

**ANTONIO AND HIS SPANISH BALLET COMPANY**

At The Royalty Theatre, Kingsway,
Season commences 30th November.

Programme includes: *Variations on a Spanish Rhapsody* by Albeniz, *Ballet Flamenco*, and the London première of a new ballet *Jugando Al Toro*

**ALL STAR GALA MATINÉE**

At the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, December 8th, 3 p.m.

**THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14th | Dec. | Wed. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Somes) |
| 17th | ,, | Sat. | (mat) | *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle) |
| 17th | ,, | Sat. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Somes) |
| 19th | ,, | Mon. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Beriosova, Ashbridge) |
| 21st | ,, | Wed. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle) |
| 23rd | ,, | Fri. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Beriosova, Ashbridge) |
| 27th | ,, | Tues. | (mat) | *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle) |
| 28th | ,, | Wed. | (eve) | *Coppelia* (Anderton, Britton) *Solitaire* |
| 30th | ,, | Fri. | (eve) | *Solitaire, The Invitation* (1st performance) *Sweeney Todd* |
| 31st | ,, | Sat. | (mat) | *Coppelia* (Wells, Doyle) *Solitaire* |
| 3rd | Jan. | Tues. | (eve) | *Pineapple Poll, The Invitation, Sweeney Todd* |
| 4th | ,, | Wed. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Nerina, Ashbridge) |
| 7th | ,, | Sat. | (mat) | *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle) |
| 7th | ,, | Sat. | (eve) | *Cinderella* (Nerina, Ashbridge) |
| 11th | ,, | Wed. | (eve) | *Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Nerina, Ashbridge) |
| 12th | ,, | Thur. | (eve) | *Pineapple Poll, The Invitation, Sweeney Todd* |
| 14th | ,, | Sat. | (mat) | *Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Seymour, Doyle) |
| 14th | ,, | Sat. | (eve) | *Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Nerina, Ashbridge) |

## — ON TOUR —

**FESTIVAL BALLET ON TOUR**

W/c 5th Dec. Alexander Theatre, Birmingham

**BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| W/c | 5th Dec. | Theatre Royal, Hanley |
| ,, | 2nd Jan. 1961 | Grand Theatre, Blackpool |
| ,, | 23rd ,, ,, | Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey |

**THE ROYAL BALLET TOUR OF NORTH AMERICA**

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## *The Royal Ballet*

## CINDERELLA

December 14, 17—**Fonteyn, Somes**

December 19, 23—**Beriosova, Doyle**

December 17 (mat.), 21, 27 (mat.), January 7 (mat.)—**Seymour, Doyle**

January 4, 7—**Nerina, Ashbridge**

Full details from Box Office COVENT GARDEN 1066

# *Letters to the Editor*

**from S. NYASALAND**

DEAR MADAM,

Following my previous letter, I am sending you now the criticism of the performance of *Heritage* at Salisbury, Rhodesia (July, 1960).

(*Copied from the Rhodesian Herald.*)

"National Ballet, in presenting *Heritage* at the Repertory Theatre last night, are to be warmly congratulated, not only for their departure from the time-worn librettos encountered in local ballet but for their successful handling of this almost overwhelmingly epic theme.

"Rita Kirshner,* with the embarrassment of material available, has been most wise and selective in her choice of aspects of Rhodesia's story, and has revealed a mind that readily apprehends what is balletically translatable.

"In Joan Turner we have a choreographer whose patterns and designs are consistently appealing, and who, by means of her spontaneous invention, can use the vocabulary of classicism to convey the vast conceptions of this ballet.

"It is a matter for some regret that the music is not that of one composer alone. But since changes in mood, atmosphere and tempo are many, and there is not available a Tchaikovsky or Stravinsky to write each bar according to the dictates of the choreographer, this must be forgiven.

"In 'Genesis,' Joan Turner, using writhing, weaving movements, successfully conveys the brooding evil and the repellent exoticism of the untamed jungle with savagery trying to withstand inevitable civilisation.

"If Peter Lennox-Byers has not the authority demanded by a role so cosmic in its implications as 'Man,' he nevertheless mimes well.

"In 'Beauty,' where are encountered all the flowers associated with this country, the grouping was most attractive, but the patterns of the too 'static' flowers in the background should perhaps have dissolved and reformed.

"Colleen Wills danced her 'Frangipanni' with extreme assurance, while Renee Collocott, so finely made and so intimately graceful, made of her 'Chosen Flower' a pastiche of rare delight.

" 'Precious Gifts' cleverly employs choreography to suit the most ardent traditionalist.

"Jennifer Caldecott's 'Mica' had much charm; Collett Paul was not without authority in her 'Gold,' and certainly Colleen Wills danced 'Uranium' with fine bravura.

"The 'Copper' pas de deux, both in conception and execution, lacked the force and vitality customarily associated with this product, but the 'Coal' pas de deux of Mildred Hewitt and Ivan Perks was both charmingly designed and presented.

" 'Achievement,' where the undulating movements of the dancers representing the mighty river contrast forcibly with the robot precision of those enacting 'Power' trying to conquer reluctant Nature, is most skilfully contrived and extremely compelling.

"Costumes were highly effective, save the Jacaranda and Bougainvillea, too reminiscent of a certain school of genteel daubing. Lighting was well managed, and the decor of Norman Yule, almost oppressively vibrant, was interesting, save in the last act, where it was overstated.

"It is sincerely hoped that *Heritage*, so successful an outcome of painstaking and loving effort, will be incorporated in the permanent cultural structure of our country, since it so finely depicts in the easily assimilable terms of the dance the story of our natural endowments, our progress and our ultimate achievement."

Hoping that you will be able to mention our efforts sometime in "Ballet Today."

**William S. Walter.**

*[Rita Kirshner is the mother of Patricia Kirshner whose new ballet *Les Chats de Nuit* is pictured on page 18.—ED.]

**from LONDON**

Dear Editor,

The best Spanish companies evince a keen interest in classical ballet to the extent of having all their dancers trained in that subject, just as all Spanish dancing schools of repute include ballet in the curriculum and with good reason, since pliés and battement tendus are invaluable exercises for strengthening and positioning for the Spanish Dance.

Unfortunately the compliment is not returned by Companies and ballet schools in London, who think that having taught a Jota for a syllabus examination they have done their duty towards the National dances of Spain with her varied types of dances that present such a vast field to explore.

It is more than likely that the exclusion of Spanish dancing by the various societies who administrate syllabi is responsible for the mushroom growth of teachers of Spanish dancing all over London, many of whom have never been trained in ballet and are therefore incapable of imparting Spanish Classic dancing, so insist that Flamenco is the one type of Spanish dancing worthy of being taught (Flamenco, by the way, is the easiest type to simulate). Therefore the Spanish dancer who also has served a hard apprenticeship in ballet has no advantage over the dancer who has studied Spanish dancing only, nor has the former the protection of any governing body here.

This situation could be remedied if Spanish dancing was included in the syllabus of the Imperial Society and the qualifications of teachers be thoroughly investigated and great stress laid on the importance of ballet technique in the teaching of the Spanish dance—who knows, after that we might have a permanent English/Spanish company as well as an English Corrida.

**Herma Diaz**

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**LONDON REVIEWS** (*continued*)

## SPANISH DANCES PRESENTED BY TANI MORENA

THE study of Spanish dancing has become very popular these days, along with the study of Spanish guitar playing, and it was interesting to see a group of young people, trained in various types of Spanish dance by Tani Morena, performing at the "Polish Hearth" on 26th October.

The most striking feature of this show was the wide range of talent it displayed. A good many of the dancers showed themselves unable even to produce the right "tock" with their hands in the *palmadas* (hand-clapping), much less perform steps correctly—and this was very much true of one solo danseuse, who showed lack of talent and training so complete as to be embarrassing for the spectators. On the other hand there were three artists who showed promise. The most impressive of these (though not the most technically advanced) was an Indian girl, Subodini. With her enormous and expressive dark eyes, striking beauty of face and body and delightful warmth of temperament she made the steps and poses spring to life, reminding us that the gypsies came originally from India—and so did the remote ancestor of Flamenco dancing. Moreover she gave the sinuous hand movements of the more Oriental aspects of Flamenco a fluid, expressive quality which suggested that she had had some training in Indian dancing. The talent is there, in full measure: if she continues to work hard at her technique Subodini may go a long way in both Flamenco and in dances of the Sevillanas type.

In the Sevillanas finale Jose Nuri, a slim young man who looked extremely Andalusian, danced with grace and style: one would have liked to see more of him. And then there was Rhuna de Saram, who showed promise in a number of items, though her line was sometimes weak.

Tani Morena is clearly a teacher of talent; her choreography was somewhat monotonous, with too much repetition of simple steps and no build-up to a final pose, but no doubt she had to keep it within the limitations of her students. Clearly her aim was to give all her pupils

*Continued at foot of next column*

## MARGARET MORRIS JUBILEE

On 22nd October, at Cecil Sharp House, there was a demonstration of dancing and health exercises as part of the celebrations of the golden jubilee of the Margaret Morris Movement, which in fact dates from 1910.

The style of dancing originated by Margaret Morris is an early form of modern dance, much more closely related to the styles of such pioneers as Isadora Duncan and Maude Allen than later modern dance forms such as those which developed in Germany and America. It shows very considerable influence from the poses of ancient Greek dancing, as represented on vases: in fact it was Raymond Duncan (brother of the great Isadora) who first taught Margaret Morris the Greek positions shown on the vases. In later years Margaret Morris moved into other fields—notably remedial exercises and the formation of the Scottish National Ballet (which bases its work on Scottish traditional dances). She gave a short talk introducing the demonstration at Cecil Sharp House, showing a vitality which would be staggering in a woman of sixty-nine—were it not that it is to be found in so many pioneers of the dance. (This is undoubtedly a profession which keeps its protagonists young in both mind and body.)

One of the most effective of the dance items was a pas de deux performed by two tiny tots—*Bogey and Fairy*, originally choreographed by Margaret Morris as a child. The dancing of the nurses from Hampstead General Hospital was of real interest: this was designed to give them the strength and stamina in their work, but one of the nurses (a tall blonde) showed the grace and ease of a born dancer. The loudest applause was evoked by the boys, who performed a number of exercises (akin to normal gymnastics) with admirable gusto.

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**Tani Morena** (*continued*)

a good chance to take the stage: this is fair enough in a private studio performance, but in a show to which the public and critics are invited it is essential to make the best possible use of the talent available—and one would have liked to see her dancing as well.

# SUSANNA ZVYAGINA

## *of the Bolshoi Ballet*

FROM previous experience in interviewing Soviet artists, I knew when I went to talk with Susanna Zvyagina just how difficult it is to get anything personal about a Bolshoi dancer, because they are quite genuinely not interested in "I" and "me" but only in "us" and "we" and so stock Western questions often strike them as either irrelevant or impertinent: consequently when interviewing them one always runs the risk of losing their interest or puzzling them thoroughly. This attitude is reflected in their stage performances, where they appear to be talking in one language, understood by all but for the moment spoken by those at the lighted end of the hall: whereas in the West we seem to be showing off up in that vacuum in a language that none of the hoi polloi "down there" could ever hope to understand.

Consequently, although what I wanted to know was how Russia selects, produces and nurtures the character dancers of which Zvyagina is such a shining example, and of which they seem to have the monopoly, I thought it best to begin by asking her general questions in her capacity as leader of the Albert Hall contingent, and as Editor of the Bolshoi Ballet's own magazine. She seemed surprised that anyone here should remember that she headed a similar troupe which performed in Stalingrad and with the Soviet Army as it advanced from there in 1943 (thus earning the Order of the Red Star at the age of 24); and even more surprised that this should cause one to ask whether there was any special reason why she was picked out for such tasks. "No," she said, "that is just what I do." Remembering how I had seen one of the dancers backstage taking full charge of the lighting and the electricians—using the most delightful Americanisms in the process !—and another giving the morning class, perhaps this was simply "from each according to his ability" put into practice.

Before I finally managed to persuade her to talk about herself, I elicited two interesting pieces of information; first that Bolshoi ballet conductors are chosen as a result of competitions held between many young musicians who have spent a few years in the Bolshoi playing for classes and rehearsals and assisting the orchestral rehearsals. Zhemtukin, who was with them on this visit, was the most recent winner. Secondly, she told me that the Bolshoi Ballet Magazine, which she edits, has a circulation of about 2,000 copies and is sent to all the State ballets in the Soviet Union to help them all keep in touch with the latest balletic developments —in fact this magazine keeps performers in the farthest reaches of the Soviet in touch with the latest technical developments, just as our Societies do with British dancing teachers.

My first approach to the subject of character dancers was to ask her how the remarkable spontaneity and naturalness in relation to one another is gained in dances such as the Polonaise and Cracovienne from *Ivan Susanin*, whatever variation of cast one sees in it. To achieve this it appears that whenever they are going to switch partners, the

couple, who may already have danced the part with others dozens of times, go through the roles over and over—maybe for three days—until they really feel quite sure they will be able to react instantaneously to any expression which crosses the other's face. Fellow artists drop in and make suggestions, and so a new interpretation is born which continues to grow with subsequent performances, however many there may be.

Knowing that Zvyagina studied Zarema, the role danced by Plisetskaya, in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, I asked when and how character dancers are chosen and how they are trained. The answer to this appeared to be that like Topsy they just grow, Zvyagina (who still does pointe work as part of her daily training) was already marked out at the Bolshoi school as a possible character dancer and watched accordingly, because they find that, rare as a possible ballerina may be, a character dancer is even rarer; however, it seems that even the Bolshoi have no method for training such rarities because they are all so different. When one thinks how different are just those we have seen—Radunsky, Levaschov, Koren, Lapauri, Sekh, Sangovitch, Olenina and Zvyagina—it is easy to see how impossible it would be to find one way to develop them all. So it seems that they become, shall we say, everyone's child, being subjected to everything and anything that might bring them to performing maturity.

In Zvyagina's own case, however, looking back she feels that the three influences which helped her most to become what she is now were that of her work with the Moscow Arts Theatre: of a group of Soviet poets: and of Sergei Eisenstein. After several years, the one aspect of the Moscow Art Theatre influence that has grown more dominant in her attitude is the manner is which, during the months of preparation for a role possible in Russia, with every new idea or feeling she develops about a new role, she automatically spends the evening turning the role over again in her mind to see if such new ideas or feelings really fit in with the role as conceived so far; and if not, how much they can help her clarify the role before she forgets them; or alternatively, whether they are so valid as to call for a new approach from which to begin to build the role anew—maybe to be scrapped again before the part appears to her to be a complete logical entity and fit for the public's consideration.

Although she considers herself no poet, Zvyagina often composes poems about her roles, for she finds this helps her feet: in getting exactly the lilt of a metre or the ring of a word to express what she actually wants to put over often helps to crystallise just how she wishes a particular phrase of steps to appear. Remembering just those few evocative words then helps her body to give the choreography just that extra edge which will make it sparkle or do whatever the situation demands.

The influence of her intensive work in many of Eisenstein's films was also of immense value, for his habit of spending minutes, hours or days until he had got the picture on film which really conveyed what he wished to say taught her the value of getting a position just right and making sure that she was showing it at the most telling angle.

So Zvyagina learned first to build a part or solo into an organic whole: secondly to give her steps their full value and thirdly the evocative power of a perfectly conceived pose, and at the same time continued her lessons at the Bolshoi Ballet school. When one considers that she said all their character dancers would have an entirely different but just as varied tale to tell of their own development, one can no longer wonder that their *Giselle* is as impeccably produced and mimed as it is danced. And remembering the "free for all" class which I watched in Hamburg in 1958 makes me wonder if it is not paradoxically true that the more one concentrates on "we" and "us" the freer "I" becomes: at any rate, in the land where Kropotkin wrote "Mutual Aid" seventy years ago.

In the Azerbaijan dance "The Pheasant"
This was danced by Zvyagina during the London season of the "Stars of the Bolshoi"

# choreographers of today

THE GODS GO A-BEGGING
first produced by the Sadler's Wells Ballet 1936. Centre of photo: Leo Kersley, the author of this article, with Anne Heaton.

## NINETTE DE VALOIS

*text by* LEO KERSLEY

"*Although Ninette de Valois is the leading contemporary British choreographer it is probable that in after years she will be best known for her great services in the foundation and development of the Vic-Wells Ballet, fast becoming a national institution . . .* "

THIS remarkable piece of foresight by Cyril Beaumont in the *Complete Book of Ballets* nearly a quarter of a century ago is remarkable not only for the fact that the critic so clearly realised the potential importance of the little English company; but also as witness to the fact—too often forgotten today—that at that time de Valois was regarded unquestionably as the leading contemporary British choreographer: and this after the production of *Jardin aux Lilas*, *Nocturne* and *Les Patineurs*. Although obviously de Valois felt that where her personal career and the good of her company came into conflict her career must take second place, and although one cannot but agree with this conclusion when taking the long view, yet the fact that the outbreak of war virtually caused her to abandon choreography must be a sore point with those numbers of ballet-lovers who liked to watch her ballets.

Ninette de Valois' career is too well known to call for recapitulation here, and, indeed, she has published two books, therefore proving herself that rarity, a choreographer fully able to express herself on paper. Choreographically speaking, to her falls the distinction of having choreographed one of the first two English ballets to survive to the present day—*Job*—and in addition what could best be described as "the English *Petrouchka*"—*The Rake's Progress*. And if *Job* has faded somewhat with the years and barely survived the death-blow dealt it by John Piper, yet *The Rake* remains as fresh and as fascinating as ever: no small feat when one considers the fate of the majority of ballets contemporary with it !

Ballet-lovers whose experience does not go back to the 'thirties find it hard to believe that in those days a new de Valois ballet was awaited with an anticipation as eager as that extended to a new work by Ashton. Yet in those days the value to the company of these two choreographers was equal: indeed, given a young Ashton in regular creation, a de Valois was imperative as

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS
on opposite page: Robert Helpmann as the Rake in Bedlam watched by the lunatics. Photo by Roy Round.

THE HAUNTED BALLROOM

first performed by the Vic-Wells Ballet in 1934, and the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet in January 1947. Music, Geoffrey Toye; decor and costumes, Motley. Scene 3. The death of the Master of Treginnis. Photo: Denis De Marney.

counterweight, if for no other reason. Ashton, then as now, was tied hand and foot to a small handful of dancers whom he personally found sympathetic to work with and who alone could inspire him: de Valois not only redressed the balance by giving leading roles to the other dancers of the company; she also had the fortunate attribute of being able to create roles which suited every dancer called upon to perform them. This faculty is, of course, because to a large extent she works in her head as does Massine, and does not mould the roles as she goes along to suit the idiosyncrasies of the individual; but, irrespective of the reason, such a gift is invaluable in relation to a repertory company with a changing personnel. To give one small example—has there ever been a bad performance in the role of the Serving Maid in *The Gods Go A'Begging*? I have never seen one, and from Pearl Argyle onwards I must have seen more than a score of dancers of entirely varying capabilities and physique in this role. The same principle, of course, holds good to a large extent of *The Rake's Progress* and many other de Valois ballets, and even her most tailor-made role, Mr. O'Reilly in *The Prospect Before Us*, survived the loss of Helpmann when Stanley Holden took it over. Of how many Tudor, Ashton or Balanchine ballets can one say the same?

The audience's keenest interest, of course, in pre-war days at Sadler's Wells and the Old Vic was in the rivalry between the pairs of dancers Fonteyn/Helpmann—Honer/Turner, and in the entirely different outlook of the two resident choreographers. To those who took a long view, the most interesting was to watch de Valois developing in one direction and Ashton in the other. The two acted as perfect foils to one another and between them a diverting, stimulating and vital repertory was built up, with Ashton concentrating on exploiting the various beautiful permutations to which it was possible to put the human physique, and de Valois creating character after original character. She has never made what is known as an "abstract" ballet and her divertissements have never been particularly successful—in this she is a true disciple of Noverre; and the mildly amusing *Douanes* and the over-long *Prospect Before Us* were the best of a not very outstanding bunch of comedies. What was outstanding in her work was the element which also makes Massine's choreography so unusual and outstanding: the capability of creating individual and original character by means of movement alone. This is a capability which seems to get more and more rare as the twentieth century progresses and this makes one regret the more the fact that de Valois no longer makes ballets.

De Valois is also a master of the creation of a period atmosphere as in *The Rake's Progress*, *Bar aux Folies Bergére*, *The Prospect Before Us* and *The Gods Go A'Begging*. These gifts for characterisation and the creation of atmosphere are unusual and most welcome especially in a choreographer who often tries to "tell a good story well." Such a combination has earned Somerset Maugham universal acclaim in a field where story-telling and technical facility

are common; de Valois, working with her struggling little company up at Sadler's Wells, showed that England could produce a successor to the giants Fokine and Massine in this difficult genre.

So I see three reasons for regretting that de Valois is not producing new ballets today: first, this would ensure a far better balanced repertoire, which at present is full of sweets and appetisers but little real meat: secondly, many of the younger dancers would be made to develop their gifts of expression instead of thinking that technique is enough, as so many seem to do today (I am sure that there were more characters in the tiny Vic-Wells Ballet of 1935 than in the vast Royal Ballet of 1960); and thirdly, it would prevent Tyrone Guthrie and others of his ilk making patronising remarks about the minor significance of ballet as an art. With the current repertory as it is, it is hard to refute Mr. Guthrie's remarks, which should serve as a warning that the lightweight repertoire of today is putting off many potential young balletomanes for good. Let us hope that the person who has for so long put the interests of English ballet before everything will do so yet once more. There must be many people available capable of administering and managing the large empire which de Valois has built up; the contemporary choreographers capable of producing adult serious ballets can be counted on the fingers, and arguably the fingers of one hand. A few more de Valois ballets of the order of *The Rake's Progress* and *Checkmate* would help to redress the balance in the repertoire and help put paid to the "ballet is only icing sugar" school of critics.

THE PROSPECT BEFORE US.
Stanley Holden as Mr. O'Reilly, David Poole as Mr. Taylor. Photo: Baron.

*de Valois created roles which suited every dancer called upon to perform them,* says Leo Kersley

Julia Farron (seen above) and many other dancers have given memorable performances of the Betrayed Girl in *The Rake's Progress*

Beryl Grey made the Black Queen in *Checkmate* one of her most famous portrayals, but when Svetlana Beriosova danced this role she too was acclaimed by the critics.


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AUSTRALIA Estella Nova and Jeffrey Kovel in the Blue Bird pas de deux from *Sleeping Beauty*, in which they are appearing with the Borovansky Ballet.

CAPE TOWN Opposite Page:—After the show party following the first performance. Front row: John Gilpin, Belinda Wright, Anton Dolin, Toby Fine. Back row: Leonard Sachs, who is presenting *The Aspern Papers* at the Cockpit Theatre starring Flora Robson and Robert Beatty (standing next to him), and, extreme right, David Bloomberg, husband of Toby Fine and impresario for Celebrity Ballet.

## SOUTH AFRICA

CELEBRITY Ballet, the name under which Anton Dolin, John Gilpin, Belinda Wright and Toby Fine danced in South Africa, had a great reception in Cape Town.

*The Cape Argus* headlined their review "Feast of Dancing acclaimed by big Cape Town audience" and went on to say "the partnership of John Gilpin and Belinda Wright was completely satisfying. Here were an artistic matching or balancing of line, perfect timing and sympathy of mood, yet each shone brightly as an individual. Anton Dolin partnered Toby Fine with classical elegance . . . ."

*Cape Times*' reviewer, Denis Hatfield, described John Gilpin's dancing as "like a whip-lash, witty, tough, dazzling"; Belinda Wright as "piquant, endearing, with fluent attack, moving lyricism, and with a superb strong technique. He saw Anton Dolin as "the perfect partner, suggesting qualities of tenderness which I have never seen equalled . . . every movement on the stage has nobility and command, with all the aura of the grand manner, and a stagecraft which is beautiful to watch." Toby Fine, the South African ballerina also came in for her share of praise.

MARY KENWOOD, our critic in Johannesburg, now takes up the story with her review of the performances in that city.

ON Monday, 17th October, after an ecstatic reception in Cape Town and Durban, South African Theatrical Enterprises in conjunction with Anton Dolin presented Celebrity Ballet at the Playhouse Theatre. Johannesburg.

The theatre, a small but delightful one, was recently converted from a cinema, and an enthusiastic audience greeted the appearance of the four artistes, Anton Dolin, John Gilpin, Belinda Wright and Toby Fine.

A recital of ballet of this kind is of necessity much more exacting and difficult to present with any degree of success than full ballet, but if one can accept the undoubted limitations of lack of corps de ballet, scenery and full orchestra (which are all so vital) great pleasure can be derived from solo performances by dancers of the calibre of those presented in this short season.

Accompanied by two pianists, Jose Rodriquez Lopez and Virginia Fortescue, and beginning with the suite of dances to the music of Chopin (more commonly performed by full companies as *Les Sylphides*), the four dancers proceeded through a programme designed to show them in all moods.

Toby Fine, a delightful and popular dancer, is among the top names on the South African ballet scene, and she was particularly well suited by the Madrilene, specially created for her (to music by Massenet) by her compatriot David Poole for this tour. Her coquetry and perfect timing with the castanets brought forth a storm of well deserved applause.

Few dancers could have looked more beautiful than Belinda Wright, as, in curled silver wig, exquisite mauve costume and carrying a huge white ostrich feather fan, she

performed, with a lightness and delicacy all her own, the simple steps of the "Rondino" created by the great Pavlova on her visit to this country in 1926, and not performed, it is believed, since her death.

John Gilpin, who assuredly lives up to his reputation of being one of the leading male dancers in the world today, made of the stimulating *Chachacha* an outstanding vehicle for the display of his superb stage personality and artistry, and was recalled time and time again.

Less successful was the performance by Wright and Gilpin of Briansky's *Romeo and Juliet*. This, however, was no fault of the dancers, but was rather due to the fact that such efforts at the telling of a full balletic story by two dancers alone are almost always impossible of satisfactory achievement.

Toby Fine once again demonstrated her sparkling technique in the solo and Grande Adagio from *Sleeping Beauty*, with Anton Dolin giving her that chivalrous support for which he is well known.

Highlight of the evening, however, was the finale—*Harlequinade* with choreography by Dolin to the music of Drigo. Here the virtuosity and effervescence of Wright and Gilpin was sheer delight, and brought the evening to an end in a burst of brilliance.

The second programme was, in many ways, more suited to this type of ballet than the first.

Anton Dolin was seen at his lighthearted best in his own Italian Suite to the music of

*Continued foot of next page*

## MOSCOW: DANCE COMPANIES OF NORTH OSSETIA

**report from Nina Karasyova**

At the end of August the four North Ossetian dance companies appeared in Moscow. These were the State Song and Dance Company directed by Zaurbek Gurzhibekov; the amateur song and dance company of the Sadon miners, directed by Konstantin Tsobolov, the children's group of the Young Pioneers' House and Children's Music School of Orjonikidze, and a group of ballet artists of the Ossetian republic.

Their programmes included folk dances and songs of Ossetian and other peoples of the USSR, and classical pieces. Of the Ossetian dances the most characteristic were *Simd*, a show ancient folk dance; *Khonga Kaft*, a slow dance for pairs, distinguished by its beautifully smooth flow of movement; *Tog Kaft*, a swift, solo dance for men, and *Tymbyl Kaft*, a swift round dance for pairs, or mass dance. The women's dances were all characterised by graceful austere movements, and the men's by virile agility and bold valour.

The concert of classical and folk Ossetian dances, staged by choreographer Sergei Koren of the Bolshoi Theatre, and Anatoly Kuznetsov, a dancer of the same theatre, featured fragments from the classical *Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Giselle* and *Chopiniana*, and an Adagio from the first Ossetian ballet *Khetag*, by the young Ossetian composer D. Khakhanov (libretto by A. Khadartseva, choreography by Sergei Koren), after the motifs of the ancient Ossetian legend. The Adagio was performed by the Ossetian classical ballet artists, Svetlana Adyrkhayeva and Tuzar Gioyev.

Although only 22 years old, Svetlana Adyrkhayeva has already appeared in many leading roles of the classical ballets, such as Odette-Odile (*Swan Lake*), Quiteria and the street dancer (*Don Quixote*), Zarema (*The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*), Fanny (*The Grand Waltz*), Gamzatti (*La Bayadere*), and Princess Badur (*Aladdin and His Lamp*).

The young ballet dancer is a graduate of the Leningrad Ballet School where she studied under Yelena Shiripina and Mikhail Mikhailov. After finishing the school in 1955, she became a soloist first of the Chelyabinsk and later of the Odessa Opera and Ballet Theatres where her partners were V. Kaverzin, A. Sereda, A. Kuznetsov and G. Gioyev. For her fine progress the gifted ballerina is considerably indebted to the Soviet choreographers S. Koren, A. Kuznetsov, N. Tregubov and A. Dadashkiliani. Her favourite parts are the perfidious Odile and the mischievous Quiteria.

## SALISBURY, S. RHODESIA

There is news of the success of a ballet created by rising young choreographer Patricia Kirshner for the National Ballet of Rhodesia. Miss Kirshner, born in Rhodesia, is known to Londoners as a dancer, for her productions on television, and the ballet in *Where the Rainbow Ends*, which she is to do again this year.

*Below:* Brian Gaskin and Judy Bowles in the new ballet *Les Chats de Nuit.* *Photo: Jon Menary*

The adagio from Khakhanov's ballet *Khetag* performed by soloists S. Adyrkhayeva and T. Gioyev.

## report from Ferdinand Reyna in Paris

AFTER the production at the Opéra on 2nd July of *Pas de Dieux*, the ballet arranged by Gene Kelly to Gershwin's Concerto (with Claude Bessy as Aphrodite surrounded by Max Bozzoni and Attilio Labis), the Opéra has produced no new works. Following his staging of *Pas de Dieux* Gene Kelly was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honour; his ballet was well composed and people found it amusing if nothing more. The Opéra will not re-awaken until the 21st December, when it will present a complete version of *Swan Lake*, produced by Mr. Bourmeister, who comes specially from Moscow to do this. In the Spring the Opéra will present a Stravinsky evening, with *Les Noces*, *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Petrushka*.

Though there is no official announcement, the promotion of Claire Motte to the rank of étoile is expected soon.

On 6th October Yvette Chauviré flew to Moscow. She will tour for a month in the USSR, and will perform *Giselle* (with Youli Algaroff) in Moscow, Leningrad and Riga.

ANTONIO and his company began a season on 6th October at the Alhambra with a programme divided into three parts, each in its own style. *Variations*, arranged to the Spanish Rhapsody of Albeniz, consists of six numbers, choreographed with extreme precision, and gives scope to subtle nuances and the expression of personality by the stars of the company: Rosita Segovia, Carmen Rojas, Carmen Rollan, Graciella Vazquez and Paco Ruiz, all of whom are fine artists. The costumes and settings by Vicente Viudes are excellent.

*Jugando al Toro* is a large-scale ballet by Antonio with book by Vicente Vila Belda, music by the young Spanish composer Cristobal Halffter and very beautiful and fantastic settings by Bernard Daydé, who has also designed the costumes in his own extraordinary style. In *Jugando al Toro* Antonio evoked the hopes, the fears and the first victory of a youth who dreamed of being a bullfighter.

The third part of the programme, *Serranos de Vejer*, is a Flamenco ballet to music by Garcia Soler, with decor by José Caballero. This is undoubtedly the most dynamic part of the show. In the pas de deux *Seguiriyas Gitanas* Antonio and Carmen Rojas show all the violence, the pride and the superb élan which Spanish dancing has when it is authentic and danced by authentic artists. In Paris the success of Antonio and his Spanish Ballet has been complete.

AT the Théâtre de l'Etoile *Braziliana*, presented by a folk-dance company from Rio de Janeiro, combined in a curious way authentic elements and music-hall scenes. A number of the danseurs and danseuses of this company appeared in the famous film *Orfeu Negro*, directed by Marcel Camus. Naturally the samba is the great success of the show. The bad taste of the show is made tolerable by the beauty of the bodies of these young men and women with their brown skins, and they compel admiration with their primitive grace and the way in which they make dancing such a direct expression of their joie de vivre.

THE Mexican Ballet directed by Xavier de Leon appeared at this same theatre, showing in the first half of its programme a suite of dances reconstructed from ancient dances. These were a little heavy and monotonous, but one could sense the care for authenticity (also to be seen in the second half of the programme) in the Mayan dances derived from bas-reliefs in ancient temples of the pre-Columbian era.

*Claire Motte*
*Photo: Studio Lipnitzki*

The jewels, the strange coiffures, the trailing capes, and the high head-dresses with great plumes all made a symphony of colours. One might almost say that the Mayans anticipated the inventions of our great dress designers working for revues. The local colour and the strange and seductive music created a most unusual atmosphere.

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**JOHANNESBURG** *Continued*

Cimarosa, and Toby Fine exhibited once again her flair for this sort of dancing. Her delightful personality and gaiety were once again in evidence in the fluffy confection of the Pizzicato Polka from *Sylvia*. It is obvious that South Africans have a dancer to be proud of in Fine, whose strong classical technique, excellent control and charm have made her deservedly popular with audiences here.

*Blue Mountain Ballads* was a new and successful experiment, with Dolin speaking effectively the beautiful lines of Tennessee Williams, and Belinda Wright and John Gilpin dancing superbly and movingly in the modern idiom. How well suited these two are to each other, and how each complements and sets off the other! Wright is a dancer of wide range and lyricism, and she seems equally at home in classical or modern ballet.

Dolin's appearance as Albrecht in *Giselle* and his obvious touch in the adaptation of dances from this ballet, with Toby Fine as Myrtha and Belinda Wright as Giselle, made it well worth while in spite of restricted space. Dolin still has the aura of greatness about him and manages to impart a little of this to all who appear with him.

John Gilpin's performance of the slow movement from Gillis's *Symphony For Fun* was yet another vehicle for his wonderful control and feeling for this type of dancing. There can be little doubt that for Johannesburg balletomanes Gilpin has been the bright star of this short season. The ease and perfect fluidity of his performances, his immense vitality and versatility have been a joy, and his speed can be breathtaking.

The evening concluded with excerpts from *The Nutcracker* with sparkling solo performances by Fine, Wright and Gilpin, and with the complete company on stage for the finale. **MARY KENWOOD**

*Continued at foot of next column*

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## Jack Anderson reporting from San Francisco

AUTUMN found the San Francisco Ballet in its customary role as opera-ballet for the San Francisco Opera. There were also two uneven modern dance concerts.

The Welland Lathrop Dance Theatre suffered from having dancers unequally proficient in the personal style Lathrop has developed over the years since his work with Martha Graham. His ballets are sometimes unnecessarily long and too often employ such props as ribbons and draperies.

One of the finest works was a dramatic solo for Lathrop to Villa-Lobos music, based on Dylan Thomas' *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*. The best group piece was *White Writing*, an abstraction inspired by the calligraphic style of the American painter, Mark Tobey. The short-phrased nervous music of Boulez was highly suitable accompaniment.

The recent Contemporary Dancers programme was disappointing. Two premiéres were announced, but one was cancelled and the other was performed in incomplete form.

This was *Opus Jazz*, which, when finished, will be a suite of dances by J. Marks to jazz-inspired music. One section of this suite, Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto*, was performed earlier this year. It was then, and remains now, a trifle, hardly worth preserving.

Another section, to Bernstein music, involved street gang rivalry and culminated in the inevitable switchblade knife battle, a type of scene already dangerously close to a cliché. Movement here seemed especially frantic and aimless. If a jazz musician were to improvise in so uncontrolled a manner, he would soon "blow himself out."

A boogie solo, excellently performed by the choreographer, was the only part of *Opus Jazz*, in its present form, to possess proper blending of style, energy, and discipline. It was also the only dance which stimulated the audience into any sort of kinesthetic response, a response very frequent at good jazz concerts.

*Continued at foot of column next page*

## from Ine Rietstap in Amsterdam

THE Nederlands Ballet and the Nederlands Dans Theater presented six new works during the last two months.

The Nederlands Ballet danced the four ballets that were taken by this company to Paris for their season there in May—Balanchine's *Serenade* and *Four Temperaments*, Sonia Gaskell's *Adagio en Allegro* and Serge Lifar's *Etudes Choreographiques*.

Guest ballerina Joan Cadzov received for these performances the prize for the best solo-work done during that year at the Thêatre des Nations. Just before dancing in Paris Joan Cadzov was honoured by being chosen as Ballerina of the year and thus winner of the Pavlova Trophy.

Jaap Flier and Renée Vincent were the choreographers of the ballets for the Nederlands Dans Theater. Flier used Henk Bading's Capriccio for Violin and Three Tapes for his ballet *Ontwricht* (Dislocated) in which light plays an important part. The effect the turmoil of our modern way of living is having on people is the theme of this work, danced by the choreographer's wife Willy de la Bye and Rudi van Danzig.

Renée Vincent, also one of the company's dancers, made his first ballet *Concerto in B flat* on Vivaldi music. It is an abstract work in which the leading parts were taken by Milly Gramberg and Jaap Flier.

Several companies from abroad visited Holland during June and July. The Holland Festival gave us American Ballet Theatre, The Little Ballet Troupe of Bombay and Pilar Lopez' company. The latter proved to be the greatest success, while the performances of American Ballet Theatre were found rather disappointing, due to the choice of programme consisting mainly of old works, illness of four stars, including Eric Bruhn, on the first night and the fact that announced guest artist Igor Youskevitch did not appear at all.

Before starting their London season the Bolshoi dancers gave three performances in The Hague for a roaring, enthusiastic audience. Two other Russian dancers visited Holland, appearing in a Russian Variety programme: Helena Vlassova from the Stanislavsky Company and Alexei Tsisjanadze. The latter also gave a couple of classes to the Nederlands Ballet.

Alexandra Danilova visited Amsterdam for a fortnight to give classes to the Scapino Ballet. Dutch teacher Nel Roos was invited by Ted Shawn to be choreographer in residence at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and did a ballet on music by Frank Martin which was performed during the last week of the Festival by students attending the whole course.

*The above report, dated August, has been held over owing to lack of space.*

The Amsterdams Ballet announced the appointment of Michael Holmes as ballet master for next season.

The ballet season started on September 11th in Amsterdam with a performance in the Stadsschouwburg by the Scapino Ballet. The programme contained two new ballets: *Meer dan een Geschenk* (More Than Just A Present) and *Lentestemming* (Spring Feeling). *Meer dan een Geschenk* is based on the story by O'Henry about a young husband and wife, who, wanting to give each other a longed-for present, have to give up the thing they value most—she, her beautiful long hair and he his golden watch. Choreographer Greetje Donker used for this work music by Stan Kenton and the leading parts were danced by Ine Rietstap and Maarten Molema. The second ballet, *Lentestemming*, was by Alexandra Danilova. Madame Danilova stayed two weeks in Holland as a guest teacher and during that time she made this light and gay ballet using music by Johann Strauss.

The Nederlands Ballet commenced their season on October 11th in The Hague, two new ballets being presented. Russian dancer Tsitsjinatze, who visited Holland some months ago, created *Clair de Lune* on Debussy's music of the same name for the company and as contrast there will be a modern work on music by Joop Stokkermans by an American, Paul Taylor, called *De Witte Salamander* (The White Salamander). Famous Bolshoi soloists Raissa Struchkova and Yuri Zhdanov are announced as guest artists for ten performances in November. They will dance the leading parts in *Giselle*. Sonia Gaskell, the company's director, has been very lucky in being able to appoint Abrachman Kumusnokov from Leningrad as balletmaster for next season. With him comes his wife, M. Baltatsjewa, who also will teach here for a couple of months.

Billy Wilson has returned to the company, as has Sonia van Beers.

The Nederlands Dans Theater, now starting its second season, left Holland on September 25th for a five weeks' tour through Israel. Performances will be given in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa. One of the company's leading dancers, Jaap Flier, has returned from Stockholm where he stayed for a month to do the leading part in a ballet film. Linda Manez, formerly with the Nederlands Ballet, has now joined Nederlands Dans Theater. Joyce Graeme came to Holland to do the choreography for the opera *Aida*, using the dancers of the Amsterdams Ballet.

**SAN FRANCISCO** (*continued*)

An older work, *Yerma*, provided most of the evening's substance. Like many ballets by Marks, it has a literary source, in this case the folk tragedy by Garcia Lorca.

Although the music by Hovhaness is not Spanish in the least, neither is the choreography. While few things are as tedious as the extraneous interpolation of folk materials into ballet simply to provide "local color," *Yerma* probably needs specific cultural rooting. For it could only arise from a milieu possessing tension between strong passions and a restrictive moral code.

As a whole, it is compelling and almost mesmeric in effect. And yet a serious reservation must be made: the dramatic development is unclear. Garcia Lorca's play is not at all obscure, but Marks' ballet is weak in revealing character motivation and crises. Even so important a moment as that when Yerma is finally driven to murder is insufficiently crystallized. To borrow terminology from Stanislavsky, the "through line of action" has not been established.

The result, despite a fine performance by Jean Mathis in the central role, is an experience akin to that of watching fascinating, but remote, creatures in an aquarium.

JACK ANDERSON

*We regret that owing to lack of space a number of foreign reports have had to be held over until next issue.*

## from Milica Zajcev-Daric in Belgrade

BEGINNING July this year Ljubljana held a Festival of Ballet in which all outstanding Yugoslav ballet troupes participated. Ballet dancers and choreographers from Belgrade, Skoplje, Zagreb, Sarajevo and Ljubljana have shown that their country's inherited talent for dance is being carefully preserved and developed. Results, however modest they may be, are making us confident and proud of the young well trained dancers already carrying the repertoire in many of our ballet troupes.

The first prize went to the Ballet of the Belgrade Opera with its excellent performance of *Giselle* (choreography Leonid Lavrovski). Rightly so, for it has shown it is by far the best Yugoslav troupe.

The second place went to Zagreb for performing the only domestic ballet at the Festival the *Symphony of a Dead Soldier* by Yugoslav composer B. Sakač (choreography S. Kastl and N. Bidjin).

The Skoplje Ballet came third and impressed us with the enthusiasm with which they danced *Ballet Impressions* by Ponikieli (choreography D. Parlić).

The prizes for choreography were won by the well known dancers Pia and Pino Mlakar, while awarded individual dancers were N. Penušliska-Mitrevska, S. Kastl, M. Janeva, Z. Prebil, J. Hafner and M. Imanić.

In the course of this Festival, and for the first time, a meeting of Yugoslav choreographers and dancers took place to discuss the spirit and the problems of Yugoslav ballet. There was word about the training of new generations of dancers and a reorganisation of ballet schools which should become uniform in all our republics. Other points raised were how long a ballet dancer should dance, and the future of those who might become permanently unable to dance.

The need for mutual exchange of experiences was underlined as well as the importance of co-operation between domestic composers, dancers and choreographers, in order to create domestic ballets.

The most interesting discussion was about our national folklore, which represents with its rich rhythms and different figures an inexhaustible source of inspiration for our choreographers. The tendency to vulgarise the contents and nature of folk dance was criticised, as well as "stylisation", which obscure and ultimately kill the truth and sincerity of folk dance.

The question on what principles and through what choreographical means the national dance will be adapted for ballet was raised, and opinions were heard that, using the classical ballet, a specific technique based on artistic folk dance should be formed. In this way our dance would become much more interesting not only here but also abroad.

At the end of the meeting it was decided that a professional association of ballet artists be formed, and that ballet festivals be held every second year.

# HEINO HALLHUBER

by INGEBORG ZÜRNER

HEINO Hallhuber, one of Germany's best classical and character dancers, was born in Munich on 16th December, 1927. His father was a business man and hitherto nobody in his family had had an artistic career, but the little boy showed such extraordinary musical talent and physical ability that it was decided that he should enter the State Opera School of Ballet at the age of eight.

Though he made excellent progress he was such a mischievous little fellow that for several years the teachers were afraid to entrust any of the children's parts to him. So he had never entered the stage, when one evening he was suddenly called upon to replace a boy in the role of little Godfrey in *Lohengrin*. There was not much time to explain things to him in detail, he only knew that at a certain point he had to walk across the stage to Elsa, but had no idea that at this very moment Ortrud would fall dead and lie between him and Elsa. Faced with the problem whether to pass in front of her or at the back, he decided to do a nice grand jeté right across her, and earned his first applause ! To make matters worse, he gave Elsa such a good kiss that he left a big red mark on the singer's cheek. When he stammered excuses, she smiled consolingly: "Never mind, Heino, I'll die in a few moments anyway."

Hallhuber left school at fourteen to devote all his time to his dancing. He soon became a member of the State Opera Ballet and at the age of 21 was promoted to the rank of soloist. His first appearance as a soloist was the title role in *Don Juan*, a ballet to Gluck music. From then on he made steady progress and by 1951 had become the company's leading danseur. Apart from guest performances at a gala in Paris in 1953, (together with Irene Skorik and Yvette Chauviré) in Rome with *The Legend of Joseph*, in Yugoslavia with *Coppelia*, with the company of Janine Charrat in America in 1957, and in 1959 at the Edinburgh Festival, he has spent his entire career with the Munich State Opera Ballet.

Heino Hallhuber is a very versatile artist. His strong classical technique, beautiful line and noble partnering make him ideally suited for all the classical roles such as Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, the Prince in *Cinderella*, the Scotsman in *La Sylphide*, or Albrecht in *Giselle*. He was a gay, youthful Frantz in *Coppelia*, and an elegant Tirrenio with smooth, sweeping movement in *Ondine*. Early in his career he also revealed a strong dramatic talent, and when in 1956 Peggy van

Photo by Sabine Toepffer.

**. . . ROLES DANCED . . .**

| | |
|---|---|
| Juan | in Don Juan (Gluck) |
| Hamlet | in Hamlet |
| The Scotsman (James) | in La Sylphide |
| The Boy | in 13th July |
| The Young Man | in Chemin de Lumiére |
| The Leading Roles | in Pas d'Action, Pas de Coeur, Bolero (Ravel), Danza |
| The Prince | in Cinderella |
| Frantz | in Coppelia |
| John the Baptist | in Salöme |
| Prince Kalaf | in Turandot |
| The Prince | in Nutcracker |
| A Murderer | in The Miraculous Mandarin |
| The Rake | in The Rake's Progress |
| The Young Man | in Still Point |
| Albrecht | in Giselle |
| The Prince | in Prince of the Pagodas |
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Heino Hallhuber with Beryl Grey who danced as guest artist with the State Opera Ballet in Munich 1958. They are seen here in Act II of *Giselle*. *Photo: Rudolf Betz.*

Praagh came to Munich to produce *The Rake's Progress* at the State Opera, Heino Hallhuber was the first non-British dancer ever to interpret the extremely difficult role of the Rake. On the first night Peggy van Praagh was among the first to congratulate him. In recent years this dramatic expressiveness combined with his sensitive musicality and plasticity of movement made him the ideal cast for the shepherd boy Joseph in the *Legend of Joseph* and Joan in *Joan of Zarissa*.

During the last years he has danced on TV quite frequently, in classical pas de deux as well as in modern ballets, and also appeared in several films.

In private life he is married since 1952 to a former photographer, and has two very charming children, a seven-year-old boy Mario and a three-year-old daughter Guendolin, who seems to have inherited her father's talent and love for dancing. Whenever time permits, he leaves the city to spend the weekend in the country, where he possesses a farmhouse dating from the 13th century. There he indulges in one of his favourite pastimes—gardening. He also loves mountaineering and skiing—"I know a dancer shouldn't do it, but I don't do it too often and I am very careful," he says, excusingly. Naturally he is fond of music and is himself a proficient pianist.

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# NEW RECORDS

**The Nutcracker**

What more appropriate records could one have to review in this issue of BALLET TODAY, than of this essentially Christmas ballet. They are the re-cut of Dorati and the Minneapolis S.O., on Mercury MMA11106-7. More titivating has taken place with excellent results so that Dorati's thrilling performance comes over with even greater impact. It is complete, of course, and with London Festival Ballet dancing it during their season at the Royal Festival Hall, this set should be the most popular Christmas present any ballet goer could receive. Strongly recommended.

**Peter and the Wolf**

Of the several recordings of *Peter*, Decca has issued the most distinctive, LXT5577, having asked the one and only Beatrice Lillie to be the narrator. Naturally it is a "must" for her admirers and I think that children will find it grand fun. I certainly laughed a lot—she uses her own particular translation—but I am not sure that I would want to hear this interpretation every time. On the reverse side, she gives a running commentary in rhyme to Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*, which may also amuse the younger generation. Recording excellent.

**The Great Elopement**

This is a ballet that, as yet, has never been performed. Sir Thomas Beecham based the book on the elopement of Elizabeth Linley and Sheridan and set it to music mainly from Handel's lesser known operas. It is complete on HMV. ALP1729 with Sir Thomas and the R.P.O. giving one of those entrancing performances with which we are so familiar. Complaints that it is not Handel but Beecham, are true enough. Nevertheless you will find it sheer delight all the way through and with Ilse Hollweg singing Miss Linley's song charmingly. On the sleeve it is called *Love in Bath*.

**Vienna of Johann Strauss**

Strauss and Christmas! What a wonderful combination—particularly with Karajan conducting the V.P.O., RCA. RB16216. Gay, romantic, happy and delightfully played—what more could anyone want as a present at such a time as this. I do not think you can go far wrong. It includes *Fledermaus* and *Gypsy Baron* Overtures, *Annen* and *Auf der Jagd* polkas, *Vienna Woods* and his brother Josef's *Delirien* Waltz.

**Petrouchka**

When I was reviewing the *Petrouchkas* in BALLET TODAY February, 1958, I ruled out Dorati's "astounding performance" as the clarity and brilliance of the recording developed into a harsh and strident shrillness that literally hurt my ears. But this new Mercury disc, MMA11105, is quite another matter and has those touches of pure magic and weird unearthly moments that bring the whole work to life. I should say it tops the list.

**Shadow of the Wind**

Only last October we had that magnificent recording of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* choreographed by Anthony Tudor—with Fischer–Dieskau, HMV. ALP1773–4, and now Decca produces on a single disc, LXT5576, that famous performance by Bruno Walter conducting the V.P.O. with Julius Patzak and our very beloved Kathleen Ferrier. It is not possible to question the sensitivity and depth of feeling that each artist brings to this rendering and although the recording is not the latest, Decca has made a fine job of the re-cutting. It is a disc I shall cherish.

**Variations**

Lifar produced this ballet, *Variations*, to show off his ballerinas of the Paris Opera and selected several works of Schubert's to form his score. This includes *Moments Musicaux* Nos. 2, 3 and 5 which are played in a complete recording by Claudio Arrau, Columbia 33CX1709. He gives a fine interpretation and includes the *Allegretto in C minor* and *March in E*, but nevertheless I feel, at times, he tries to probe too deep and thereby misses some of the more obvious beauty.

**The Seventh Symphony**

With Massine re-staging his symphonic ballets, one might say that Beethoven's *Seventh* is again in the ballet news but without the notorious outcry! Herbert von Karajan, one of the great contemporary Beethovenian conductors, gives his rendering of this work on RCA, RB16212, and it is well up to expectations in the outer movements. All the power and urgency you can want but the second and third are possibly not quite to the standard he sets, though all his followers may not agree with me. The playing of the V.P.O. and the recording are excellent.

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# NEW BOOKS

**Anton Dolin. A Volume of Autobiography and Reminiscence. Oldbourne. 30s.**

Memoirs of great artists are living experience. Books like Karsavina's *Theatre Street* and this new autobiography of Anton Dolin are valuable not only to those who remember the past, but to the young who seek to know.

The evolution of British Ballet, so closely interwoven with Russian Ballet, must make the young sometimes feel like people who have entered a theatre on the last act of a play and have no idea what has gone before. This autobiography will help them to understand what happened, and to realise the extent of the debt which every British dancer owes to the Russians.

Author of two excellent books *Divertissement* and *Pas de Deux*, Anton Dolin is nevertheless no professional writer. His memoirs are penned without artifice, with a human innocence and frankness that have the ring of truth. His lack of reserve in writing of himself and others I find most refreshing, though some—especially those whom he criticises—may consider his style unrestrained. To read his book is delightfully like hearing Dolin talk after dinner.

It was through Seraphine Astafieva (and, incidentally, also my father Sir Oswald Stoll) that Dolin made his first contacts with Russian Ballet. Enraptured by Astafieva's dancing at the London Coliseum (1917), the twelve-year-old boy could not rest until he had become her pupil.

Four years later, when my father staged *The Sleeping Princess* with the Diaghilev Company at the Alhambra, the young Dolin secured a small dancing part. He was as enchanted as I was by Olga Spessivtseva (he uses the short Anglicisation, Spessiva), an ethereal vision in a deep rose dress who, as Aurora, pricked her finger and slept for a hundred years. But unlike myself, he was in the enviable position of being able to wait for her in the wings every night and throw a shawl over her shoulders lest she should catch a chill.

The story of their later work together, and how this "Sleeping Beauty" eventually suffered a tragic breakdown in New York, is most movingly told. Like so much else in Dolin's life, his partnership and friendship with Spessivtseva, whom he considers the greatest Giselle ever, is deeply felt from the heart.

In this book it was thrilling to revive one of my happiest memories—seeing the triumphal success of Dolin when he appeared for the first time in Nijinska's *Le Train Bleu* at the Coliseum (1924). After that his reputation as an international star was made.

The vicissitudes of a dancer's career, the glitter front-stage, the discipline and sweat behind, financial difficulties and artistic disappointments, physical mishaps—water on the knee and, more recently, broken toes—are fully recounted in Dolin's book. But he has leavened the struggle and the heartbreak with many witty reminiscences.

Trefilova, a famous Russian ballerina who made a habit of consuming a dozen oysters a night sent over from the Savoy to her Alhambra dressing-room, impressed Dolin as a boy. Years later in New York he persuaded his partner Toumanova to eat oysters before her début in *Giselle*. After a breathtaking success, Toumanova cried, "It was the oysters! But if there must be an 'r' in the month, what do I do when I dance *Giselle* in May?"

Dolin's account of the formation of the American Ballet Theatre, the Markova-Dolin Company, and the birth of Festival Ballet, is naturally a most exciting aspect of his autobiography. Queen Mary, who attended the momentous first London season of Festival Ballet at the Stoll Theatre in 1950, was fascinated by Markova's pink ballet shoes.

"Well, well," she remarked characteristically, "how on earth can you dance, my dear, on such little shoes?"

Dancing trips to Honolulu, America, India, Australia, Africa, Israel and the Continent: this book is a balletomane's cave of delights. There are more than thirty fascinating and historic photographs, and a good index. Altogether a wonderful book that will be enjoyed by all who love ballet. If I had not already read it, I should be greatly disappointed if someone did not give it to me for Christmas!

**DENNIS GRAY STOLL**

**Great Ballerinas of To-day. By Cyril Swinson (A. & C. Black 7/6d.)**

This book, which is the fifteenth in the popular *Dancers of Today* series, gives a brief but adequate record of the major events in the careers of twelve famous ballerinas of our day. Diplomatically listed in alphabetical order, the ballerinas chosen are Alonso, Chauviré, Fonteyn, Hightower, Kaye, Markova, Plisetskaya, both Tallchiefs—Marjorie and Maria, Toumanova, Ulanova and Vyroubova. Of these, four were born in Russia, four in America, two in England, one in Cuba and the other in France. The publishers ran a competition earlier this year offering prizes to competitors whose choice of twelve dancers

# For your Christmas Book List

most nearly coincided with the Editor's. The response was tremendous but, as was to be expected in the field of ballet where every dancer's merits are fiercely championed or debated, no absolutely correct entry was received. Nevertheless I think the Editor's choice is a fair one although there are bound to be those who will be disappointed because *their* favourite is not included.

Under the heading "Ballet Relations" the ballet genealogy of each dancer is followed through to the teachers with whom they studied. These teachers in turn trace their dance descent back to the 17th century. It makes a fascinating record.

Reproduction of the many excellent photographs is up to the usual high standard of this publishing house, whose catalogue now carries some sixty books on the ballet.

I really do not know how Messrs. A. & C. Black continue to give such excellent value for the mere 7s. 6d. this book costs.

ESTELLE HERF.

**The Young Pavlova, by E. M. Almedingen. Max Parrish. 10s. 6d.**

The latest addition to the series of "Famous Childhoods," designed —to quote the blurb—"to make the idea of greatness credible to young people," is devoted to Anna Pavlova. Of the higher aims of this series I am not competent to speak, since I am convinced that in ninety-nine cases our of a hundred this theoretical "greatness" turns out on closer inspection to be a combination of vitality and hard work; in the present case, it is a minor fault in the telling of the story that insufficient attention is drawn to the natural vitality and the capacity for hard work which the subject of it must *per se* have possessed in order to have reached the eminence she achieved. Indeed, the whole affair is made rather too much the result of "inspiration" and not sufficient honour is paid to the sweat and toil which are a ballet dancer's common lot. (Young aspirants to ballet honours should go on to read Karsavina and Sokolova in order to gain an insight into this angle.)

However, this book, while breaking no new ground, makes a very pleasant impression on the reader, and the illustrations by Denise Brown are delightful and entirely in keeping with the slightly old-fashioned language in which the tale is told; the book is written in Nesbit, rather than in Ransome, style and this is, after all, entirely appropriate. At the price *The Young Pavlova* should solve the Christmas present problem for many aunts and uncles and delight a great many first-year ballet students.

JANET SINCLAIR.

**The Glass Ladder, by June. Heinemann. 25s.**

At first sight this book would not appear to come within the province of a magazine on ballet, because the author made a brilliant career in musical comedy and revue of the 'twenties. But her first attempts to mount the ladder to stardom were made in ballet shoes and she has many interesting stories to tell of people who have since become famous ballet personalities and of those who were already established. Pavlova was dancing in London. Ninette de Valois and Noel Coward were her classmates. One day Pavlova came to the studio and out of thirty children only three were selected, June and Ninette de Valois were passed over, but as she was preparing to depart Pavlova pointed to June and the interpreter said "Madame will also take the little one." Thereafter to Pavlova June was always "the little one," and she was extraordinarily kind and generous to the little girl, teaching her a pas seul and taking her forward to receive applause at the end of the first performance of *Snowflakes*.

When the season ended at the Palace Theatre Pavlova took half-a-dozen English children as pupils. June was amongst them, but her family was going through one of its regular financial crises and there was no money for lessons. Swearing the family to secrecy, Pavlova agreed to teach her for nothing.

Then Pavlova departed for her world tour and the little girl was disconsolate. June's mother, possibly one of the first and best examples of the ballet-mums we all know so well today, was not to be daunted in the career she had chosen for her offspring. She wrote to Pavlova and the letter caught up with her in America. Once again the ballerina came to the rescue, persuading Ivan Clustine, one of her former ballet masters living in Paris, to take the little girl as a private pupil.

In Paris June met Isadora Duncan and many other well-known people, and her description of life in the city at that time is a period piece in itself.

Then came another crisis and she was forced to get a job or abandon her studies.

An engagement at the Folies Bergère saved the day. Soon after her fourteenth birthday June received a summons to dance before Diaghilev and was offered a contract for five years at eight pounds a week. Her mother's reaction to this was quite the opposite to the excited young girl's. "All this drudgery for five years at eight pounds a week?" she cried. "Oh no. If my daughter is good enough for Diaghilev she is


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# The Ballet Annual
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Bigger and better than ever, this year's issue has contributions by Dame Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes, Marie Rambert, George Balanchine and Vera Volkova who write in praise of Frederick Ashton, Tamara Karsavina who writes on Benois, Joan Lawson on *The New Generation of the Royal Ballet*, Ivor Guest, James Monahan and many others. As usual there is a stimulating review of the year's ballet activity and almost 100 superb photographs by leading ballet photographers. Nov. 24. 30s. net.

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good enough to stand on her own feet." This was not so easy, however; there was very little money in ballet and finally the opportunities got less and less, so June started all over again in the chorus of an Andre Charlot revue.

This is a rattling good story of the theatre of that period, life backstage with the many brilliant stars and those who were emerging during this heyday of musical comedy and revue. June does not attempt to gloss over her love affairs and is very frank about her marriage to Lord Inverclyde which was finally dissolved. She is now happily married and lives in California.

ESTELLE HERF.

**Ballet History** by June Ryan. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

This book is one of a large number of volumes in a series planned as a reference library for boys and girls. As a reference book it has real merit, for it covers the history of ballet from the 17th century right up to the present day. It is clearly written, and its accounts of the events it covers are on the whole just, even though the small scale of the book makes it impossible for the author to deal with any subject in detail. Unfortunately, the "blurb" on the jacket is optimistic in stating that "out of a spate of ephemeral ballet books June Ryan's 'Outline' is likely to emerge as of lasting worth." The fact is that the author has not kept up with post-war developments in our knowledge of ballet history. She makes no mention of Weaver, the Englishman who founded the art of ballet (in the modern sense of the word). Writing of Tudor's ballets, she ignores his greatest work, *Dark Elegies*—though this work marks a turning point in the history of modern ballet. But perhaps her most astonishing omission is an account of the career of Bournonville, a great choreographer whose works (including *La Sylphide*) are very much alive today.

**Nijinsky: A Biography** by Françoise Reiss. Translated by Helen and Stephen Haskell. Black, 30s.

The legend of Nijinsky continues to fascinate people, and his name is still one to conjure with, in spite of the fact that his career was relatively short (1907–17) and ended over 40 years ago. Colin Wilson (whose understanding of ballet is negligible) made him a key figure in his book *The Outsider*, while Françoise Reiss was so bowled over by reading a French translation of Nijinsky's *Diary* (published in France in 1953) that she began work on a thesis on Nijinsky which she submitted at the Sorbonne in 1956. This thesis, altered to take account of observations made at the time of its submission and further information collected by the author, was published in France in 1957 in two volumes, *La Vie de Nijinsky* (a biography) and *Nijinsky ou la Grace: Esthétique et Psychologie*, a discussion of the artistic significance of Nijinsky's work as dancer and choreographer.

The first volume (now translated into English) has value because it brings together a good deal of information which up to now was available only in a variety of books, booklets, articles and reviews. Moreover Mlle Reiss has interviewed several people who knew Nijinsky, and reproduces a number of fascinating photographs and drawings. (Unfortunately not all the illustrations are used in the English translation.)

Notwithstanding all the hard work Mlle Reiss has put into this book, she has not produced anything like a definitive biography. She is clearly unaware, for example, of the fact that Nijinsky was already going mad at the time of the production of *Till Eulenspiegel*, and often found himself unable to take rehearsals, so that the company had in effect to improvise the ballet at the first night: further performances were out of the question. But she covers a great deal of ground, and her book is interesting throughout.

FERNAU HALL.


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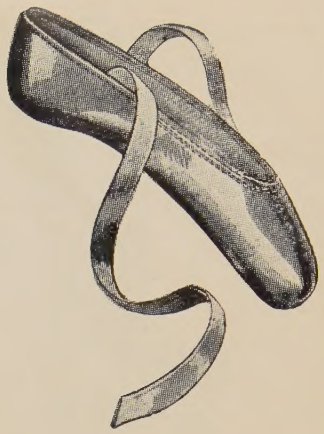
# GIFTS for the Balletomane



NOWADAYS dancers and scenes from the ballets decorate a high proportion of the many new products coming on to the market. In order that you do not miss them in your Christmas shopping spree Sonia Roberts sends you out armed with a list of gifts suitable for all age groups.

by SONIA ROBERTS

## *for the dancer*

Whether you are buying for the student or the fully fledged dancer, a gift of a pair of shoes, leotards, tights, tutus or other accessories will be welcome gifts. There are a number of London firms who stock all or many of these and who will give you expert advice. For shoes, tights, and leotards you could not do better than consult Anello & Davide, Gamba's or Gandolfi's, Anello's also supply tutus. Burnet's specialise in theatrical fabrics, tights, leotards, gloves, belts etc. Catalogues are available on request from all these firms.

If that favourite niece or nephew has not yet started dancing classes you can pay for a series of lessons at the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea. For children one lesson per week per term costs £3. 3s. 0d. (or 2 lessons per week per term £5. 5s. 0d.).

## *for everyone*

*A subscription costs 12s. for five issues, 23s. 6d. for ten issues published each year.*

Home or overseas a gift subscription to your favourite magazine *Ballet Today* will not only be a constant reminder of the donor but give the recipient something to look forward to throughout the year. If you wish the first number to reach its destination before Christmas we suggest you start with this (December) edition. A gift card will be included with the first number, or if you wish to send personal greetings please enclose with the remittance.

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Readers of this magazine need no introduction to the beautiful photographs of Mike Davis for his very earliest pictures were published in its pages. Now seldom a year goes by without someone publishing a book of his work. This year Jarrold & Sons Ltd. have produced the Mike Davis Ballet Calendar in full colour with thirteen pages size 11″ x 11¾″. The calendar costs 10s. 6d.

## *teenager specialities*

The dance lover's own special perfume "Tutu" by Saville is presented this year in even more attractive forms than before. There is a silver and scarlet and green coffret containing, perfume, top to toe fragrance and a perfume stick all nestled in white satin selling at 13s. 3d. and a pink satin lined pink and clear plastic box containing perfume to retail at 3s. 9d.

However the idea which I feel will really go with bang, because it is the ideal price, size and type of gift for a girl to give to every fellow member of her dancing class or ballet club, is the handbag size phial of "Tutu" attached to a ballerina greeting card and selling at 2s. 6d. A box of the six different cards depicting Fifield and Blair in *Casse Noisette*, Margot Fonteyn in *Swan Lake*, Danilova and Franklin in *Coppelia*, Violetta Elvin in *Sleeping Beauty*, Markova and Dolin in *Swan Lake* and Beryl Grey in *Cinderella*, sells for 15s. Each separate card has a matching envelope of the correct size. The dancers are named inside each card, and on the back of the card is an explanation of what a Tutu is. The cards are in full colour and in gilt.

Useful at the time of receipt, and still decorative after all its contents have been utilized would be the best way to describe the Picture frame Gift Cabinet of Stationery produced for Christmas 1960 by John Dickinson & Co. Ltd. Costing 8s. 6d., the cabinet contains 24 sheets of high quality writing paper and 24 matching envelopes.

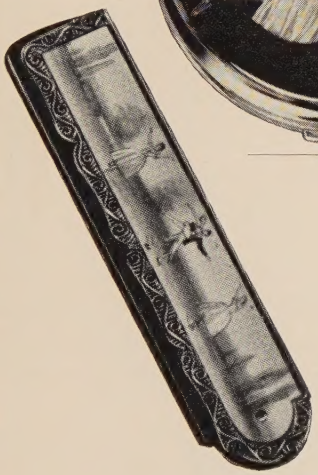
However the real plus of this present lies in the lid. This carrying a charming reproduction of the Carlotta Edwards' painting of the second act of *Giselle*, has a three dimensional white frame enabling the lid to be hung up as a picture on the wall. A neat ribbon hanger to achieve this transformation is thoughtfully provided. Alternatively the casket when empty would provide the tidy balletomane with a pretty receptacle for handkerchiefs or trinkets.

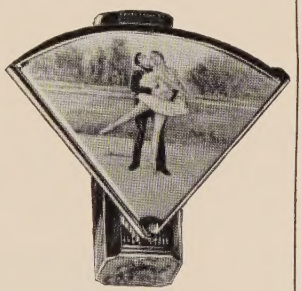
## *for the home*

Gifts that in the years to come may well become heirlooms are china figurines hand built by Doulton Fine China Ltd. There are two *Giselles:* The Forest Glade, which shows Giselle just in process of casting off her Wili veil and Giselle as a peasant maid seated on the cottage bench (as in our illustration). The former figure stands 7¼ in. high and the latter measures 6¼ in. Giselle in the Forest Glade costs £6 17s. 6d and the seated Giselle 7 gns. Other dance figures are The Ballerina 7½ in. high costing £7 2s. and La Sylphide selling at £6 17s. 6d. All are made of bone china.

Decorative wall plaques of dancers also provide an interestingly different 'home' gift for the balletomane. Lyndale Domestic Products have recently produced an excellent series of designs depicting boy and girl national dancers from Spain, Hungary and Roumania, also a pair of plaques showing a tutu clad dancer in two characteristic poses. The plaques are well modelled and hand painted in full colour. They come in a choice of matt white or glossy black backgrounds. They are made of resin bonded plaster and cost 14s. 11d. each.

Another series of wall plaques—a particularly pretty one shows a scene from *Giselle* executed in low relief—is manufactured by Moorgate (Birmingham) Ltd. The background of this plate comes in a choice of Wedgwood blue or pink.





## *for the glamour girl*

Powder Compacts depicting dancers are a speciality of the house of Laughton & Sons Ltd., who celebrate their centenary this year. Our illustrations show three lines in their Stratton range. (1) a convertible compact for loose or solid powder with a Baron photograph of four ballerinas in the *Pas de Quatre* on a blue translucent ground. This sells at 25s. 6d. and is 3⅛ in. in diameter. (2) a decorated hinged pocket comb, size 4⅛ in. x 1 in. which sells at 12s. 6d. and (3) a spring top lipstick holder with mirror, price 21s.

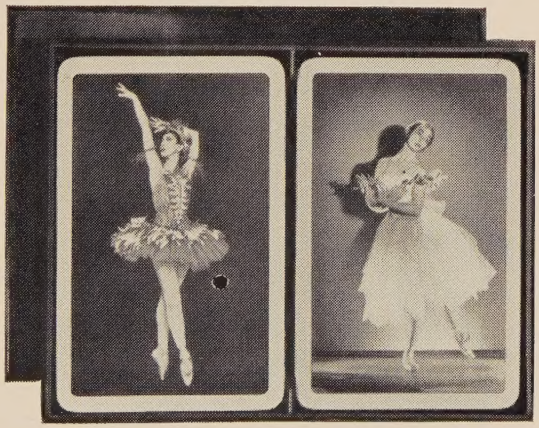
For the solid powder user there is a newly styled compact 3 in. across with all over motifs of a ballerina and her partner selling at 17s. 6d. This has a matt gilt background. For really lavish giving there is musical compact (again the *Pas de Quatre* caught by Baron) selling at 97s. and a presentation set comprising convertible compact, pill box and decorated comb case in a satin lined casket, selling at 66s. 6d.

## *for the party*

If you are holding a children's party a quick way to convert ordinary looking scoops of icecream, coconut madeleines or cakes into clowns straight from the Commedia Dell'Arte is with Festival Wafer Ediheads. These amusing round faces are constructed of sugar icing and biscuit, completely edible and fix into the sweet by means of a little tab. In a gay window fronted carton which explains their use you can buy five heads for 2s.

A most useful reminder of ballets enjoyed in the past, and a surefire stimulant to dinner time conversation about the ballet is a table mat bearing in its centre a colourful ballet scene. Pictorial heat resisting table mats ready packed in a gift casket are made by Henry Elwin Ltd. Among the subjects are Ruth Page's Merry Widow and Les Sylphides.

Thinking of eating around Christmas—well there are no actual dancer motifs decorating biscuits tins this Christmas but although it is not specifically drawn from a particular ballet the gay masquers on Huntley & Palmers Carnival Assorted biscuits (price 6s. 9d.) will recall such ballets as *Winter Night*, *Antonia* and *Carnival* itself, while dancers are well to the fore and clearly recognisable in the colourful tin which shows the cast of *My Fair Lady* on its top and sides. (Price 15s.). Both these tins contain an assortment of cream filled, jam filled and iced sweet biscuits.



## *and afterwards*

If after the party you like to settle down to a quiet game of cards buy a twin pack of playing cards with Margot Fonteyn and Anya Linden depicted on the back of each set. Made by Thomas De La Rue, the double pack retails at 13s. 6d. or single packs at 6s. 9d. Both single and twin packs are in maroon plastic boxes with a coloured sleeve and include a small descriptive leaflet on both dancers.

## *for the collector*

Collecting costume dolls is a hobby of many dance enthusiasts and a most useful way of learning both geography and about possible new elegance for that end of term school dancing display. A new series of costume dolls recently marketed by Dol-Toi Products combines the accuracy of the collector's piece with a sturdiness, and cheapness, which allows the youthful recipient to play with the dolls as toys. None of these little dolls exceeds 4 in. in height, but each is dressed in real felt, wool, silk, satin or cotton, embroidered or trimmed with fur or tinsel and jewelled in keeping with national custom. They stand firmly on lead feet and have bodies of flexible wire which allow them to be made to sit, stand or take up attitudes. They are also suitable for use as cake decorations. Prices range between 4s. 11d. and 7s. per doll.

All serious balletomanes collect books and pictures of their favourite personalities, but until recently no permanent record of their voices could be added to the collection. Jupiter Recordings Ltd. have now made four 7in. records of talks on ballet by Beryl Grey, Marie Rambert (which includes a conversation with Karsavina) Adeline Genée and another of Tamara Karsavina on her own. These retail at 15s. 11d. each.

Talking of collecting books, if you like to preserve your copies of *Ballet Today* don't leave it too late before you order your binder for this purpose. This holds 24 copies of the magazine, each copy secured by thin wire opens flat at any page, and copies can easily be removed at will. The spine is marked in gold blocking—*Ballet Today*. The cost with packing and postage is 13s.

## *for the plant and garden enthusiast*

The Herald range of ballet figures made in plastic could be termed as either toys or ornaments, and would make ideal stocking fillers for the junior balletomane.

A charming way of presenting them to an adult however would be to set them in a shallow dish among some dwarf trees, cacti or small alpine plants, in the manner of the popular Japanese gardens. With the addition of a handbag mirror, the scene could be *Swan Lake* or, if with just plants, *Giselle* or *Sylphides*. Singly, the figures of a ballerina, male dancer, corps de ballet (arms raised), corps de ballet (arms lowered) retail at 1s. each. Alternatively there is a miniature stage with crimson curtains and footlights cut out of cardboard containing the full set of dancers and selling for 4s. 11d.

And there is even a plant named "Ballet Girl"—a fuschia, so called because the upper petals in shocking pink with the lower ones in white are reminiscent of a dancer's tutu. This delightful half-hardy perennial will thrive outdoors in the West Country, the sheltered corners of a southern garden, or in the cooler north on a cottage window sill. Ask your local nurseryman for this.

## *for your address book*

**Shoes, leotards, dancers' accessories, materials, etc.**

Anello & Davide, 96, Charing Cross Rd., W.C.2.

Gamba Ltd., 46, Dean Street, W.1.

E. Gandolfi Ltd., Dorset House, 150 Marylebone Rd., N.W.1.

B. Burnet & Co. Ltd., 22, Garrick St., W.C.2.

**School of Russian Ballet,** enquiries to St. Luke's St., Chelsea, S.W.3.

The other products are obtainable in leading London stores, chemists, china shops or stationers, but if you find difficulty in obtaining them write to us and we will ask the manufacturers to forward you a list of stockists in your area. Each enquiry must be on a separate sheet of paper accompanied by a 3d. stamp.

*All prices quoted were given as correct by manufacturers some time before Christmas and slight fluctuations may since have occurred, for which of course* Ballet Today *can accept no responsibility.*

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